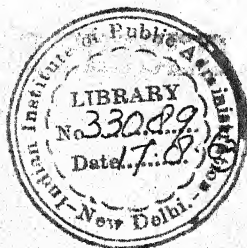


# CONGRESS MISSION TO MALAYA

BY

**Dr. C. SIVA RAMA SASTRY**  
**TENALI**



FOREWORD BY

**Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, M.D., M.R.C.P., F.R.C.S.**

*Ex-Vice-Chancellor, Calcutta University*

*Ex-President, Indian Medical Council*

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## FOREWORD

Dr. Shivaram Sastry, one of the Medical Officers attached to the Congress Medical Mission to Malaya, has taken considerable pains to record in the following pages the important events during the period between the date of the Mission's departure from India and the date of its return to this country.

Any Mission in order to be effective and efficient must be provided with proper men and materials. It was fortunate that, as an Organiser of the Congress Medical Mission to Malaya, I found in Dr. Sastry and in his colleagues a group of loyal, conscientious and selfless workers who by their activities, throughout their stay in Malaya, not only earned their own reputation but enhanced the prestige of the country which sent them and the people thereof.

The appeal to the Congress Working Committee for medical relief and other forms of relief came primarily from the Indian settlers in Malaya but the Congress took it as an appeal from suffering humanity and as such, the President of the Congress enjoined the members of the Mission to give relief to all, irrespective of caste, creed and colour. The Mission worked in Malaya for  $2\frac{1}{2}$  months during which they operated from 8 centres and attended on 1,22,860 patients of whom 20,615 were Chinese, 82,475 Indians and 19,770 Malaysians, Indonesians and a few Europeans and Americans.

From all accounts that I have received, it appears that the work of the Mission was appreciated by every one and at one time there was a

demand for the continuity of the Mission in Malaya for a longer period. The Malayan Peninsula had, before the Japanese invasion, a very well-organised system of providing medical relief to the people. It was the objective of the Mission to fill in the gap until the Civil Government was able to restore the original system prevailing in the country.

Dr. Sastry's book is a narrative of events from the date on which they went to Malaya upto the day they left the country. It is put in simple but effective language. The book tells the readers how a group of workers of a different country could, with sympathy and goodwill, serve people, talking a different language and following different customs. I am sure, readers will appreciate this simple narration.

I cannot conclude this foreword without thanking the President of the Congress, my co-organiser Sirdar Vallabhbhai Patel and the members of the Working Committee for the great initiative they had taken and the great encouragement the workers had received from them in every stage of our programme. The donors who gave us money and materials deserve our sincere thanks. Capt. S. K. Roy, the Secretary of the Mission, was mainly responsible for the success of the scheme. I wish every member of the Mission would realise how we, the people of India, feel proud of their achievement and appreciate with gratitude the services they rendered in the name of the Congress. They went as ambassadors of hope and encouragement to the distressed in a foreign land and they succeeded admirably.

**B. C. Roy**



## PREFACE

I have great pleasure to write a 'preface' to a very good book on Malaya written by my colleague and friend Dr. C. Shiva Ram Sastry. The booklet is both informative and instructive, and those who desire to know something about the present day Malaya, would profit by its reading. There are very few books on Malaya written by Indians—hardly two or three. One written by Dr. Sastry is the latest book on Malaya—a part of Greater Asia.

The Second Overseas Congress Medical Mission to Malaya has done excellent work during the brief span of 90 days. It treated throughout the length and breadth of Malaya, 1,22,860 patients of whom 2 were Americans, 66 Europeans, 19,770 Malays and others, 20,615 Chinese and 82,475 Indians. The credit of this excellent piece of work done by the Mission goes entirely to the component parts that composed the Mission of whom Dr. Sastry was one. The Mission's work was appreciated equally by the Sultan or the peasant, the Governor or the man on the street, a white planter or a rubber tapper Ramaswamy, Arunachalam or Simhachalam. The Mission had throughout worked on the basic principle of co-operation and co-ordination with the existing medical institutions. This humanitarian piece of work had considerably contributed to enhance the prestige of Indians amongst the Malays, Chinese and other nationals. The efforts of the

Mission have echoed far beyond the narrow confines of a Chinese Village or a Malay Kampong. As a voluntary neighbouring country's organisation bringing relief to all, regardless of colour or nationality, it has done much to create better understanding between the different races of Malaya. The very action of a country, itself prostrate from disease and famine, in sending such needed medical supplies and some of its all too few doctors, to succour a neighbour is sublime in its un-selfishness. Excepting the first overseas Congress Medical Mission to China, there is probably no historical parallel to this in any part of the world.

Nagpur City, }  
20—2—1947. }

**M. R. Cholkar**

Director, Congress Medical Mission to Malaya,  
Formerly Dy. Director, Congress Mission to China.

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

In the year 1938 the Indian National Congress sent a Medical Mission to China. Those were the days when China was involved in a life and death struggle with the Japanese. Dr. Cholkar was then the deputy director of the Mission.

In the year 1942 when Burma fell into Jap hands, some of my colleagues in the present Mission had been to Assam to serve the unfortunate Indian evacuees from Burma. While bombs were showering from above, bullets chasing from behind, and dacoits waylaying on the roads, many a poor Indian evacuee had to succumb to starvation, epidemic and death.

It was again in the year 1946 that the Congress was called upon to serve humanity in a land that had been devoid of rice, cloth and medicine for full four long years consequent upon Japanese occupation. Added to it, Indians in Malaya lost one in seven of its total population in the construction of the Siam Death Railway.

The stories of the sufferings of those one lakh of victims that fell, had a deep effect upon me. It is to their memory that this book is dedicated. Their work is a great link in Asiatic communications.

What we could do or could not do, I leave it to the public of Malaya to judge. I wish to thank all the members of the public that have so splendidly co-operated with us in our task.

If there be any credit for the work done in Malaya, it shall go to the national organisation that sent us—the Congress.

Lastly I have to thank my personal friend Mr. Bijoy Singh Nahar, M. L. C., Office Secretary of our Mission, for all that he did for the success of our Mission.

C. S. SASTRY

## Congress Medical Mission to Malaya

*Congress President :* Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Calcutta

*Organisers:* Sirdar Vallabhbhai Patel, Bombay

Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, Calcutta

*Secretary:* Capt. S. K. Roy, Calcutta

*Office Secretary:* Mr. Bijoy Singh Nahar, M.L.C., Calcutta

*Director :* Dr. M. R. Cholkar, Nagpur

*Deputy Director:* Dr. Birendranath Basu, Calcutta

*Medical Officers :* Dr. Debendranath Sinha, Calcutta

Dr. Jyotirmoy Majumdar, Calcutta

Dr. Subodh Ranjan Chakroborty, Bengal

Dr. Satyendra Chakroborty, Bengal

Dr. Anna Dada Narde, Bombay

Dr. Harold Theodore, Champa (C. P.)

Dr. Chittaranjan D. Desai, Bombay

Dr. K. M. Datar, Bombay

Dr. C. Siva Rama Sastry, Tenali(Madras)

### Personal Assistant

to the Director: Mr. J. Bhattacharya, Calcutta

*Medical Assistants:* M. Sital Chandra Samanta, Calcutta

Mr. Gangadas Banerjee, Calcutta

Mr. Amal Chandra Sanyal, Calcutta

*Drivers :* Hirendranath Dutta, Calcutta

Ranjit Kumar Banerjee, Calcutta

### Headquarters

*in India :* 36, Wellington Street, Calcutta

*Headquarters*

*in Malaya*: 247, Ampang Road, Kuala Lumpur

*Centres of work:* (1) Kuala Lumpur Drs. Cholkar, Basu and Desai

(2) Kota Baru      Drs. Narde and  
Datar

(3) Sungei Patani Dr. Theodore

(4) Taiping Dr. Majumdar

(5) Teluk Anson Dr. Sastry

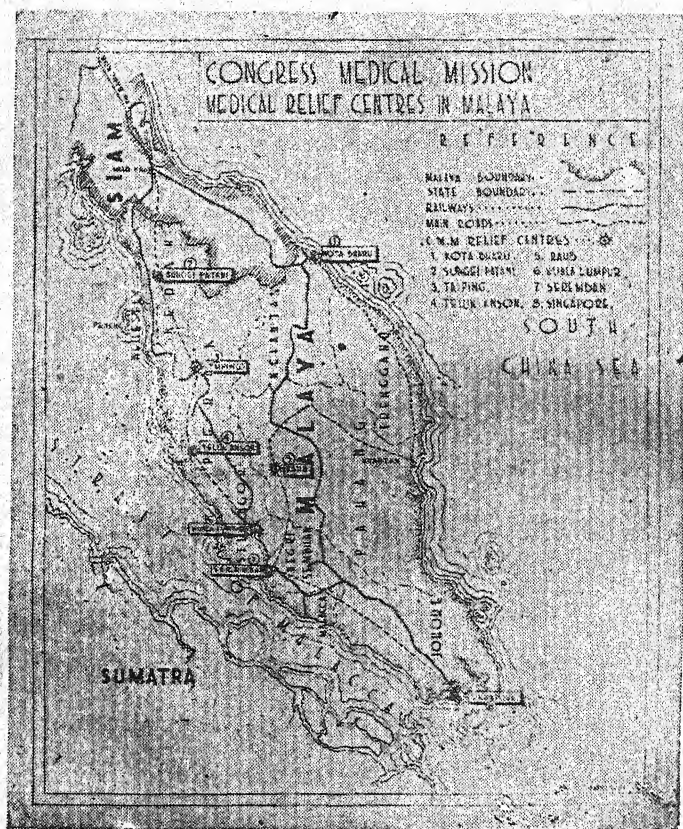
(6) Raub Dr. Sinha

(7) Seramban Dr. Subodh Ranjan  
Chakroborty

(8) Singapore Dr. Satyendra Chakroborty



*Mission Members with Congress Leaders, 36 Wellington Street, Calcutta*



# CONGRESS MISSION TO MALAYA

## Victory to Malaya!

Malaya has given India the magic slogan of 'Jai Hind'. Malaya is the land of origin, organisation and glory of the Indian National Army. The seven and a half lakhs of Indians in Malaya have made tremendous sacrifices and have undergone untold sufferings in the cause of their mother-land. If the British professions be true, Malaya is on the threshold of liberty. Let every Indian greet Malaya and the Malayans with 'Jai Malaya'.

## I. N. A. Trials and After

Mohan Singh formed the first Indian National Army in the Japan - occupied areas. He had to dissolve the same with his own hands at a later date. Sjt. Subhash Chandra Bose went to Malaya and established the second I. N. A. What the I. N. A stood for, and what its relations with the Japs were, India did not know for a long time. This was due to the heavy war-time censorship regulations that were in force in India. Even from what one could gather from radio news, none could arrive at true conclusions. Bluffs and counter-bluffs went far beyond commonsense and imagination, both on the side of the Axis and on that of the Allies. Truth was at a complete



discount and nobody could have a correct estimate of the war situation. Such is the effect of modern propaganda. Fortunately the war has come to a close rather sooner than was expected. It has been followed by the trials of the 'ringleaders' of the defeated nations. The I. N. A. officers could not escape these trials. These trials created a sensation in India. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru too took to barrister's robes. Late Sjt. Bhullabhai Desai defended the first trio of the I. N. A. officers. His masterly defence brought to light all the implications of the International Law and showed to the world what the I. N. A. was. It never functioned as a Jap mercenary army. It only upheld the right of a subject nation to revolt against an army of occupation, by any means and by all means. Ultimately the British changed their policy and released all the I. N. A. prisoners-of-war.

With these trials, the people of India began to take a keen interest in the affairs of Malaya and Burma. It was the Indians overseas in these two countries that played a glorious role in India's fight for independence. Then in the middle of 1945 the Indian Press began to publish reports of the sufferings and sacrifices of the Indians in Malaya during the last four years. It was said that many Indians were going round with jute rags for want of clothing, and that many were dying for want of medical aid. Malaya has been devoid of medicine all these four years. The whole of India was moved by these tales of unendurable human suffering.



## Origin of the Medical Mission

Normally medical missions are the thought and creation of one or two top leaders. But this time things were different. Thousands of wires and letters were sent to the then Congress President Maulana Azad by the Malayan Indians seeking relief from India and the Congress. Innumerable enquiries were made by all sections of the Indian public, as to what steps the Indian National Congress was going to take. On the eleventh of December, 1945, Maulana Azad placed all these letters and wires before the Working Committee at its session in Calcutta. This resulted in a unanimous resolution of the Congress Working Committee deciding to send one medical mission to Burma and another to Malaya. Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy of Calcutta and Sirdar Vallabhbhai Patel of Bombay were deputed to be the organisers of the missions. Capt. S. K. Roy of Calcutta was appointed an honorary secretary to the missions. Within a fortnight's time, men and material were ready. Funds were easily raised from the generous public for the expenses. Without even a formal appeal, nearly five hundred people from the different provinces offered their voluntary services to the mission.

Dr. M.R. Cholkar of Nagpur, who was formerly the deputy director of the Congress Medical Mission to China, had offered to serve as an ordinary medical officer in the mission. He is an experienced man of sixty five years of age. His age belies the spirit within. His is the boisterous spirit of a youth of thirty. The honour of being the director of the

Mission was thrust upon him. Dr. Biren Basu of the Bengal Civil Protection Committee was selected as the deputy director. For the last five years he has been running the B.C.P.C with its fifty medical relief centres efficiently. Nine other doctors, one personal assistant to the director, three medical assistants and two drivers were sent to Malaya in the Mission.

### The Utility of Sending Missions

Exchanging of ambassadors was an age-long custom in India. Even a thousand years ago India and China realised the necessity and value of exchanging ambassadors. In those days ambassadors were embodiments of goodwill, peace and culture. China adopted the Indian religion and India adopted the Chinese philosophy of cheerfulness and hospitality. There was no thought of cruel exploitation or political domination. Hypocrisy under the guise of diplomacy was not brewing to precipitate wars. Hieuan-Thsang and I Tsing formed the ideal goodwill missions.

Those days are changed now. Association and oneness are replaced by dissociation and disintegration. Extreme self-interest of all phases, personal, group, communal, provincial and national has led the world through two great wars. Extreme blind Nationalism has taken a step detrimental to the interests of peaceful neighbours. Imperialism, the sinister product of this spirit, is making a

feverish attempt to subdue the legitimate aspirations of the exploited nations.

Unfortunately India still happens to be one such nation that is being wronged. Consequently the Indian National Congress, its mouthpiece, has evolved certain vital principles. These are identical with those of other subject nations. Liberty, democracy and non-aggression are the three cardinal principles of India and its Congress.

The role played by the mercenary British Indian troops and agents in Indonesia and other subject countries is disgraceful. It has created deep misunderstandings elsewhere about the ideals and feelings of India. To clear this thick haze is a great necessity today for India, particularly when India is on the threshold of independence.

Good-will missions are of three types, political, cultural and medical. The political mission, whatever its motives might be, is always viewed with suspicion, since its main feature is to make capital out of the other nation's weak-points. The cultural mission of scholars with their high ideals and dreams, cannot achieve practical results of a satisfactory nature. It can only go to the minds of the few intelligentsia but not to their hearts. The medical mission is the third in order, but not the least in importance. Its work leaves lasting impressions. The psychological effect is tremendous. By training and by profession, a doctor is always above petty prejudices and vices. He is born to treat even his bitterest enemy as his own

kith and kin. His aproach is not to the brainy cliques of politicians, nor is it to the hair-splitting logic of the intelligentsia. It is a simple and direct aproach to the hearts of the suffering humanity that craves for sympathy from its lowest depths.

So long as I was in India, I could not estimate the possible results of a medical mission. Now even a common man in the streets of Malaya knows what the Indian National Congress is and what it stands for. The grateful Malayan cannot but be an affectionate brother of the Indian neighbour in all his difficulties.

### **'Hide and Seek' Policy of the Government**

The Government of India somehow did not wish the mission to go. Yet they did not want to say 'No' themselves. They sent the Mission's applications for formal permission to the Burmese and the Malayan Governments. The Burmese Government bluntly refused permission for the Congress Medical Mission to function in Burma. Lord Louis Mountbatten the supreme authority in Malaya not only gave us the necessary permission, but also promised full co-operation. Then the Government of India began to play delaying tactics. We were informed that only a batch of twenty could go. When twenty members were selected, the passports for three of them were cancelled at the last moment without giving any reasons for the same. Those three were ex-I. N. A personnell and perhaps that

might be the cause of such action. When we applied for a common permit, we were asked to apply for separate permits. When we applied for separate permits, we were given a common permit. Two of our advance party members were asked to proceed by a particular plane on a particular day. But the letter was delivered to us two days after the plane left Calcutta. The other members were asked to proceed by a steamer that was going to dry docks.

Meanwhile the Government managed to send a Mission of their own to Malaya under the leadership of Col. T. S. Sastry of Madras. Of course the statement issued by their Mission at a later date from Malaya, to the effect that the condition of Indian labourers in Malaya working in the European estates, is far better than what it is in India, fully justifies its objects and aims. The Government asked us to merge ourselves into its Mission. Dr. B. C. Roy replied that the Congress Medical Mission will work in co-ordination with any and all other centres of Medical relief, but never under the auspices of the Government or any other Medical Mission. At last the necessary permits were granted and we could make our own arrangements for travel.

### **Mission's Retort and Exposure of Tactics**

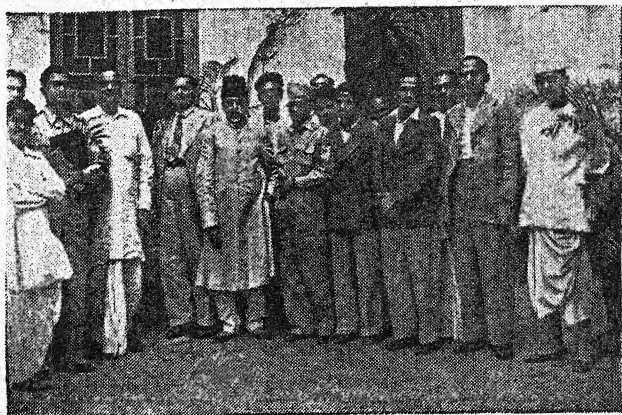
At a press conference held in Dr. B. C. Roy's palace, Dr. Roy read out the correspondence that passed between himself and the Government, and showed how the Govt. was hindering the mission.

He said that he could get a definite reply from the Government, only after the Secretary of State for India, Lord Pethic Lawrence intervened and assured of co-operation to the mission. But the inco-ordination of the various departments of the Govt. continued to cause delay to our departure. Though we could secure permits, we could not get travel facilities for a long time. In the meeting above referred to, Dr. Azad said that the British Cabinet Mission was going to come shortly to grant political power to India. But the day-to-day policies and actions of the British Indian Government did not mark any change, and hence he said he must think twice before he comes to a conclusion about the Cabinet Mission's intentions.

On the thirteenth of April'46, Dr. B. C. Roy, Capt. S. K. Roy and myself were sitting in our office-room and Dr. B.C. Roy informed me, "I have done everything that one can humanly do. After all the Government is not ours. Without its co-operation none can leave India. If at all you go to Malaya some day, please tell the people of Malaya that my heart and feelings have always been with them, though I could not send the Mission earlier in spite of my best efforts."

Luckily on the same day an Australian sea-plane arrived in Calcutta from England. It was going only upto Rangoon and from there to Australia direct. Capt. Roy somehow managed to get exchange tickets to Singapore. We all left Calcutta on the fourteenth morning by the sea-plane.

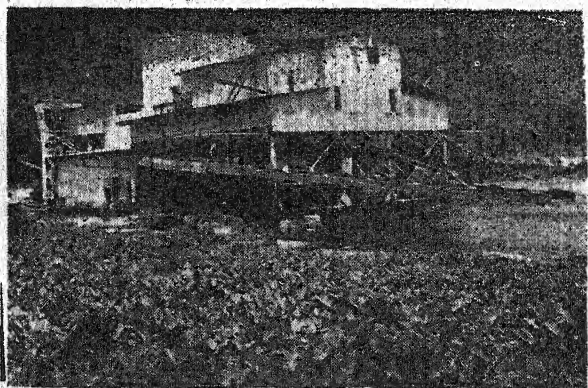




*Mission Members with Dr. Azad at Dr. B. C. Roy's place.*



*Supplies of the Mission*



*Tin Mining Boat*



*Malay Mosque Bagan Datoh Road*



## Farewell Party at the Bengal Chemical

A few days before our departure The Bengal Chemical and Pharmaceutical Works gave us a farewell party. The party was held at its Works and it was attended by over ten thousand people. Dr. Bidhan Roy thanked all those individuals and institutions that translated the thought of the medical mission into an achieved fact by virtue of their magnificent donations. Maulana Azad presided over the function. He spoke at length on the attitude of the Government. He said that, if the mission were to be of some other nature than medical, he would have refused to send the same as a protest. While presenting the badges to the members of the mission Dr. Azad said, "You are not mere medical officers of a medical mission. You are the non-official ambassadors of the Congress. That means, you are the messengers of the India's goodwill and sympathy. Whoever it might be, Hindu, Muslim, or Christian, whoever it might be, Malay, Chinese or Indian, you must treat all alike, with one head, one heart and one hand." Director Cholkar gave a fitting reply. He said that, if four people were to come to any one of his centres for relief, though all will be treated alike, the Malay will be attended to first as the son of the soil, the Chinese next as our great neighbour and a cousin, a European third, and lastly an Indian. By following any other procedure we will give scope for others to misunderstand us. An Indian can never misunderstand an Indian. As Dr. Cholkar was making this solemn declaration the whole hall was resounding with shouts of "Jai Hind". Every

shout of 'Jai Hind' made us more and more humble, since we all felt that the responsibilities ahead were rather heavy.

### Who is Who in the Mission

*Maulana Azad* was the then president of the Congress. He is a great scholar in the Islamic literature. He is a powerful speaker in Hindusthani and his language is highly constitutional and precise. Every word of his is weighed before it is used. He is shrewd and can grasp any subject with ease. He has got a dignity and personality of his own and he is known far and wide for his nobility of thought and purity of heart. We feel that his blessings were the inspiring cause of the success of the present mission. He has already established his name as the A-1 politician of India by certain of his recent masterly steps in politics such as the offer of coalition ministries to the Muslim League in all Congress majority provinces.

*Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru* is a man of first reactions and quick action. He was the second leader that took active interest in the affairs of the Mission. His visit to Malaya on the 17th of March '46, electrified the Malayan atmosphere and created deep interest in our affairs in the minds of the Malayan public. The Indian Relief Committee of Malaya made all arrangements for our stay and smoothworking in Malaya.

*Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel* of Bombay is one of the two organisers. Since he is a non-medical

man, he confined his work to the raising of the necessary funds to meet the expenses of the mission. He has done his work splendidly.

*Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy* of Calcutta was the chief organiser of the mission. He was formerly a member of the Congress Working Committee, President of the Indian Medical Council, Mayor of the Calcutta Corporation, and also a Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University. He is considered by many as the first physician of India. He is also a professor in the Carmichael Medical College. In him are blended the art of a teacher, the skill of a physician and the shrewdness of a politician.

*Capt. S. K. Roy* was the secretary of the Mission. He is honest, sincere and methodical in his work. A right man for the right job that he was, he spent many days with one meal a day being immersed in office work. Half the credit for the success of the mission should go to him as an efficient office secretary.

*Dr. Desai* of Bombay comes from a family of ardent congress workers. He was already in jail for some time before, for the fault of being a nationalist. He is extremely sincere in his work and is absolutely honest. Being fresh from the College he is a little sensitive. He is fond of chocolates, and we used to call him with affection as the 'chocolate-baby'. He has just left for America for higher studies.

*Narde and Datar*: These two friends are from Maharashtra. Narde is a man of bubbling spirit and

Datar is silent. Narde is an enthusiastic socialist. He knows some thing of wrestling too. He is apt to show this spirit to his intimate friends, of course in lighter vein. Narde and Datar are inseparable friends from their college days. An onlooker may mistake them for 'twins'.

*Dr. Theodore* is a good conversationalist and a devout Christian.

*Drs. Majumdar, Subodh, Satyen, and Deben Babus* are all hardened workers in various relief organisations before.

*Seetal Ch. Samanto, Sanyal and Amullo*, the three medical assistants in the mission were all attached to the Bengal Civil Protection Committee. They are all disciplined and ardent soldiers in relief work. Honesty and sincerity are their special traits.

*Mr. Jeevananda Bhattacharya* was the personal assistant to the director. He is a politician by nature. He did the spade work for the First Malayan Indian Conference. He was elected as the chairman for its session in the Chettiar Hall in Sentul, held on 3rd, 4th and 5th of August '46.

### Rangoon the City of Ruins

On the 14th of April, we arrived at Rangoon by 12 noon i. e., four hours after we left Calcutta. The sea-plane stopped in Irravady river and we were lodged in the Strand Hotel. The city that was at one time considered to be beautiful and lively spreading in all directions from the

famous Golden Pagoda in the centre, is nothing but a heap of ruins today. The walls of the big buildings, where they at all exist, are all full of pigeon holes created by the Jap splinters. The magnificent beams and girders of the lofty houses have become curved wires burying their noses in ruins. There are more heaps of debris than lonely buildings standing here and there. The Railway station was the main target of aerial attack. Even churches were not spared. The gigantic Golden Pagoda was luckily the only prominent structure that remained unattacked by the British and the Jap bombers. It is a solid construction of bricks with a superficial coating of gold. In that pretty village of gods and temples, is preserved till today the holy hair of Lord Buddha. It is said that the pagoda was constructed sometime about two thousand years ago. Monks in their pretty uniforms were offering prayers in Sanskrit while the crying Burmese babies were being silenced by the mothers by thrusting cheroots in their little mouths. The idols of gods are identical in form and size with those that can be seen in Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda in Andhra Desa. There are dozens of miniature temples with a centrally situated bigger one. Everywhere people were kneeling before the gods to pray. But unfortunately none of those that venerate Buddha so much, has ever cared to be a vegetarian outside the four walls of the temple. Lord Buddha seems to have gone to the East leaving his life-principle of 'Ahimsa' behind, to his mother-country.

The Fourteenth of April was a 'holi' festival day

to the Burmese. Just a few days earlier, we had our clothes soiled by the coloured water of the Bengali 'Holi'. But the Burmese 'Holi' is different and peculiar. The Burmese use not only syringes but also hose-pipes. Coloured water is not used. Even an anti-holi-vala of a fanatic cannot escape the Burmese holi dipping. Gods in the temples are washed with force—I mean with hose-pipes. Jolly young couples go round the temples dancing and singing choric songs. The veil of the 'Holi' day gay spirit seemed to have covered the deep wounds of the City of Ruins beyond remembrance. After all wherever the shadow of the devil of imperialism is cast, nothing but ashes and smoke can be left behind.

Bahadur Shah was the last Indian emperor of India. His remains are lying in a small uncared-for tiny little tomb in Rangoon. "What a pity! The British addition of insult to injury is unbearable!", said Netaji Bose when he visited this place of pilgrimage, and broke down in tears.

An I. N. A Hospital with three hundred wounded soldiers was demolished by the persistent British aerial attack. The huge red-cross mark on the top of the building could not guarantee any protection to the three hundred souls inside. Perhaps that very gaudy mark made the building the target for the attack. India has lost three hundred precious lives but their spirit of patriotism and sacrifice has now pervaded the whole of India.

Even during our brief stay in Rangoon, we could

witness bitter anti-Indian feeling among the Burmese. Near a South Indian hotel a Burman and an Indian had a quarrel over a few pies. In a couple of minutes this resulted into an anti-Indian demonstration by about two hundred Burmans. Soda bottles flew into the air. What could be the possible cause of this inhuman contempt and prejudice against fellow human beings? To my mind the reasons are two and are clear. One is that our business-men, when they go to Burma, do not make it their homeland, but always try to make some money and return to India with the same. The second reason is that the Indian labour which is disorganised, runs into cut-throat competition with the local Burman labour. The labour must realise that labour is one, whether it is Burman or Indian; that unhappy division and competition will benefit nobody and that organisation is strength. The Indian businessman must decide before he invests in foreign lands, whether he is prepared to settle down there or not. Failure to do so will cause many international complications to Indians as a whole.

### Bangkok the Beauty Spot of Asia

We heard that Siam is a land of monks and pagodas and that the people professed Buddhism. When we stopped at the aerodrome, the first thing that attracted our attention was a silver locket exhibited in the local stall. On the locket was inscribed the picture of Lord Hanuman. Behind their Buddhism, the people of Siam retained and developed to a high degree, all their ancient traits



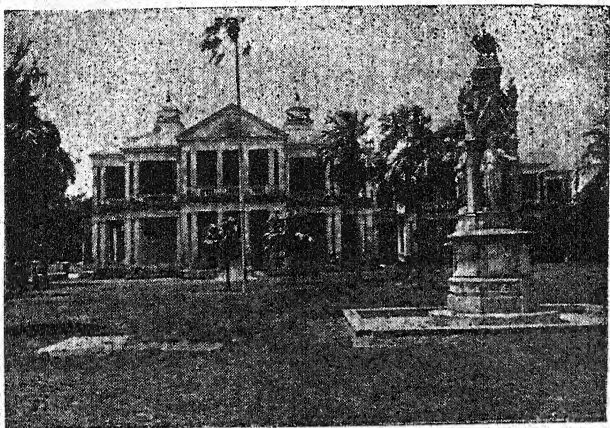
of Hindu culture. After all Buddhism is only an off-shoot of Hinduism. Buddha is still venerated by many Hindus as one of the ten 'Avatars' of Lord Vishnu.

The dances of Thailand are all based on stories from the famous Hindu epic Ramayana. The Siamese worship Sun and Fire just as the Hindus in India do. The hotel where we stopped is named as Suriyanan hotel, i. e., 'Sun hotel.' Their language is rich in Sanskrit words and the proper names are mostly Sanskritic names. There is one marked difference between a Buddhist and an Indian Hindu. When a Hindu takes to 'Sanyasasram', he does not retain the liberty to become a house-holder again. But the Buddhist can at leisure take to the order of a monk, and with impunity come back to family life after a short time.

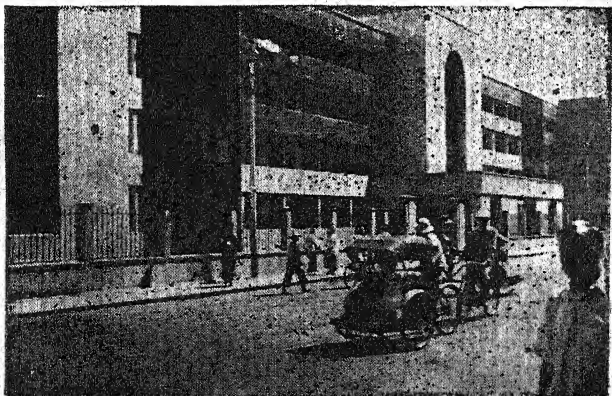
The currency in circulation is the tical. Each rupee is equivalent to four and a half ticals. On the tical note is imprinted the beautiful picture of a pagoda.

Siam is known as the world's granary for paddy. It is a purely agricultural country. The only industry, if it can be called an industry at all, is husking and milling of paddy. The State is a constitutional monarchy. The government is an independant republic. Wirepulling influences of the western imperialisms are very marked. The government's foreign relations, exchange and perhaps even the internal economic structure are all indirectly controlled by the British.

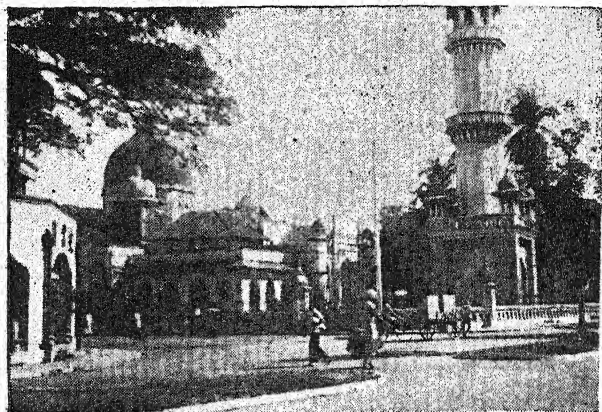




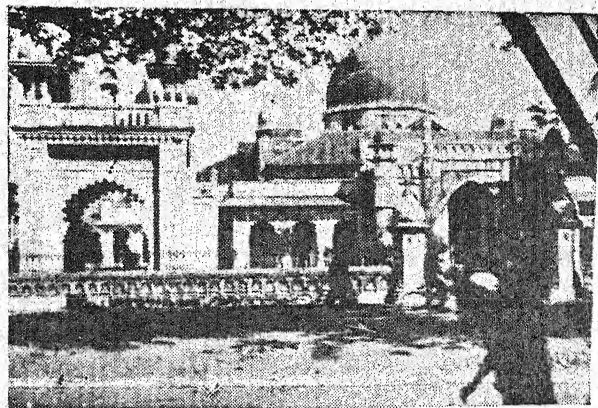
*High Court Penang*



*Police Quarters Penang*



*Malay Mosque Penang*



*Malay Mosque Penang*

People are getting rapidly westernised in dress and manners. Even the labourers have developed an improved way of living though they are extremely poor. Ladies are rather forward and are engaged in all finer walks of life such as trade and commerce. Men are robust, healthy and hard-working. Fair complexion and fine features seem to be the monopoly of the Siamese. An average Siamese is a man of fine disposition and he always puts on a smiling face. In every action of his, one can find art peeping through. Even in his dress there is a fine blending of colours. The wooden houses constructed on high pillars approximately six feet above the ground, have all got a plan. The painting on the walls reflects a coloured hue that cannot but be pleasing to the eye. The wooden bridges too, that span the small canals before every house have all a curve, colour and protrusion that exhibit to the world the living art of the Orient.

The Chinese art, painting, and sculpture is an entity by itself and is a little too gaudy and has too much of detail and depth of colour. But the Siamese art is simple and superb. Its beauty lies in its simplicity of design, matching of light but plain colours, and even the music is more pleasant and soft to the ears than technical and harsh. The Siamese are fond of stringed instruments. Even India has from times immemorial considered the 'Veena' with its strings as the queen of all instruments. The Hindu depicts the Veena in the hands of the Goddess of Knowledge.

'Liberty' and 'Democracy' are the two English

dailies published from Bangkok. Mr. Madhava Sivaram who played an important role in the I.N.A. is the editor of one of these.

Bangkok has a population of a million citizens. Out of these, five thousand are Indians. All of them are business-men. Most of them are today permanent residents of Siam and are treated with respect and love by the Siamese. Pandit Raghunath Sarma is the local secretary of the Indian Independence League. He was released from the jail only a few days before our arrival in Bangkok. He is a man of fine manners and is a sincere nationalist. He received Sjt. Bose on the first day of his arrival in Bangkok. He was also by the side of Bose on the last day of his departure from Bangkok to the unknown destination. Mr. Sarma told us that the smiling face of Bose which he saw on the first day of his arrival was the same even on the last day of his departure. Regarding the mystery of Bose's death, Panditji said that though his brain and commonsense told him that he is dead, his heart was refusing to believe it. He paid a glowing tribute to the work done by the 'Bala Sena' during the I. N. A. days. Young children who formed it were doing splendid scouting work.

### Kuala Lumpur, the Capital of Malaya

To Kuala Lumpur we flew next. Right through the middle of the town is flowing a river, as if it is breaking the heart of it. Till a few years back this river used to cause periodical havoc to the town on account of its floods. Since the river was

canalised some years ago, that menace is now a remote possibility. The name Kuala Lumpur is derived from 'Kuala' meaning the river.

Dollar is the currency in circulation in Malaya. Its exchange value is one rupee and nine annas roughly. For the first few days we were puzzled since the purchasing value of the dollar was as low as that of seven annas only. A dollar has hundred cents and each cent corresponds to our one pice. On the first day of our arrival in Malaya, I gave a five cent note to a beggar. He began to stare into my face with a sense of despair, perhaps even disgust. What can he get in Malaya for five cents when the minimum denomination used in the market happens to be ten cents? We soon got adjusted to the new life and ceased to think in terms of exchange value; we considered a dollar as equivalent to a half-rupee coin.

The Malayan mosque with the two branches of the river embracing it is a beautiful spectacle in the heart of the town.

We went to an 'eating shop' to have a cup of coffee. Eating shop is how the coffee clubs in Siam and Malaya are known as. In the gate corner was sitting a Chinese mother on a low stool. A tick-tick noise drew our attention towards her. That was the noise caused by the chop-sticks, that were being used in an effort to pour the soft boiled porridge from the cup into the mouth of a little baby. I later on came to know that even babies in arms, who in other parts of the world would be

sucking mother's milk, are fed on porridge by some Chinese mothers.

Roadside hawkers of cigarettes and fancy articles are a special feature of Malayan evening life. 'Mia' sellers and carbide lamps give life and light to the streets. Black-market is a universal evil and none can stop it since every one is an open black-marketeer. Even the Military rations that are supplied to high officials find an easy way to the road-side black-marketeer.

Commercial artists that can paint simple long line - drawings of fine scenery on paper photo frames, enamel dishes and toys and greeting cards attract passers-by as if they form a magnetic block. They are mostly Chinese and paint by dozens an hour. The whole family is absorbed in art and even a child can be seen either cutting or collecting paper to size. These born-geniuses of Chinese artists are selling their beautiful art to the greedy and niggardly purchasers at ridiculously low rates. The higher sense of appreciation of fine arts is dead among the rich. As a rule they only hanker after intoxicating drinks and other vices to satisfy their baser passions. Public servants, professional men, and men that are the 'motto' of the nation, are no exception to these vices.

On a special request of mine, a Chinese overseer took me round the Chinese dwelling quarters. Huge families live in highly congested dark dungeons in dozens. Of course poverty may be one of its causes. More potent than this is the joint-



family system, and the increasing birth rate. It is rather very rare to find a Chinese lady that does not have a child. A Chinese can never be accused of the usage of artificial ways of birth-control. Even a mother of ten children adopts one or two of the neighbour's children.

In the China town area, I was shown the 'Chamber of Death', a common hall to which all the dying are brought just before death. Chinese consider it highly inauspicious to have a death occurring in a dwelling house. Perhaps some still believe that every dead man becomes a ghost. They pray to ghosts lest ghosts should haunt them, and 'bribes' are offered to them in the shape of offerings. Chinese Thowkies (rich men) get prepared in advance and order costly coffins decades before death. Thousands are spent on these advance preparations for salvation. There is a system of death insurance and there are 'Societies' doing business in it. Men over forty often join this 'Society' and make their sons contribute a nominal sum as an annual subscription. When the man dies, the 'Society' undertakes to bear the costs of the after-death ceremonies. A man of forty met a man of fifty and enquired about his health. 'Oh! doesn't matter. My boy is subscribing to the 'Society' was the ready reply of the aged philosopher.

Chettiar Street in Kuala Lampur is something like the Clive Street of Calcutta. It controls the economic life of Malaya to a large extent. Chettiers of South India have invested about ten crores of rupees in business and another ten in banking.

Their rates of interest are exorbitant and seem to have prevented the growth of any fair business. Their way of banking never helped any industry in Malaya. Malaya is to-day devoid of any industry worth mentioning. The position of certain business men is scandalous and an Indian booklet of two annas in price was sold to me by a Chettiar for One Rupee and nine annas. A yard of shirting cloth that a merchant gets from India for about ten annas is being sold for five to seven dollars without any sense of shame or decency. So long as the means of distribution are in the hands of unscrupulous, petty minded big business-men, silent robbery and exploitation are sure to exist. The state must control everything and release the same through its own agents, if such a scandalous state of affairs is to be put an end to.

### The B. B. Park

Amusement parks with big establishments could be seen in every town of Malaya. The B. B. Park was one such running in Kuala Lampur. There were three Cinema halls, two drama halls and innumerable 'Eating Shops' within the premises. The main features of the park are the multiple and varied gambling dens. Shooting on a disc of numbers, dropping a coin into a box with a rotating disc of numbers inside, pushing a button that makes a marble jump over 10 pits and fall into one, are all the attractive games that soon induce a week-minded visitor to gamble and empty his own pockets. After the Jap advent the whole of Malaya is to-day crazy after gambling; every man,



woman and child wants to grab something without working or paying for it.

Chinese dramas have more of noise than of music. Huge discs make a hell of noise and it is said that they are meant for timing i. e. Tala. Ghosts make their appearance on the stage standing one over the other with long gowns to camouflage the one below. Mountain warfare and defending fortresses are often the main features of their dramas. Chinese stage is the only stage on which the artists show their backs to the audience. It is human nature that man speaks loud of what he is internally deficient in. The Chinese artist wears long moustaches and longer beards. Their pictures also depict the same. Their gods in the temples too have got the same. One relieving feature in their dramas is the fine scenery and the gorgeous settings.

Batu caves are within four miles of the town. One has to climb over a hundred steep steps to approach them. The caves are natural and are deep. The entrance is from a side. There is an opening at the top of the cave. Rain water pouring from above periodically flushes the cave out. The mid-day sun's rays give light to the interiors of the cave. A Tamil brahmin erected a little temple inside that cave and visitors pay a small coin now and then, perhaps as a token of admiration to the brahmin that goes all the way up morning and evening to pray. Many south indian labourers have named their children as 'Batu Malai' just as they would have done in India as 'Aruni-

chalam and Simhachalam'. 'Malai' means a mountain.

Just a few steps below the original cave is situated another cave which is deeper and darker inside. There is an elevated platform of bamboos over which was running a trolley line. We all thought that the cave might be one of the Jap ammunition dumps. Our notions were all wrong and we were soon dis-illusioned. When we proceeded a few yards inside, we were taken aback by a repulsive smell. On enquiry we were informed that the trolley lines were now being used for collecting bats though meant for excavation work. It seems bats make delicious dishes to the Chinese.

Near the foot-steps of the Batu caves there are barbed-wire enclosures with Jap prisoners-of-war inside. These prisoners are made to work almost naked with loin clothes. Near about their tents is situated another cave in which the Japs used to store their ammunition.

Sentul work-shop in Kuala Lumpur was the biggest railway workshop in Malaya. It was heavily bombed by the British before. A Malayalee doctor stuck to his post till the last breath of his life, serving humanity. All others having left the work shop, he was the only solitary soul waiting for a call from any wailing labourer. He was wading through the debris to do his duty. As if heavens wanted his precious life, wicked Death snatched him away suddenly. He became a silent victim to a cruel bomb

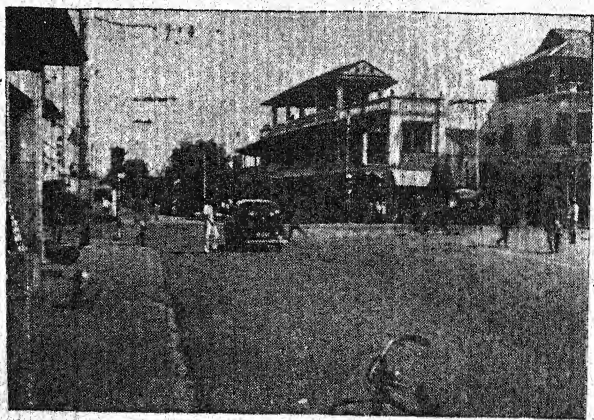
The Museum in the Batu Road Extension used to exhibit to the world invaluable treasures of art; but



*Harbour Penang*



*Harbour Penang*



*Penang City*



*Children in Ramakrishna Mission Home Penang*

to-day the whole building is in ruins. The broken parapet walls all around seem to suggest to the casual visitor, 'What is gone is gone. The dead will not return to life'.

Sulphur springs in the Santul area are popular. Many patients suffering from itches and rheumatism take a regular dip in this pool. The water is warm due to the sulphur content.

Mariam Temple is in the heart of the town. It is the centre of activities for Indians. It is also the head-quarters of the Indian Relief Committee of Malaya. Swami Atmaram and Brahmachari Kailasam are the two swamis who form the nucleus of the Indian politics. Their way of approach is all humane. Swami Atmaram is a man of ninety but looks a man of twenty in energy and grit. He toured the whole world and is a highly cultured scholar. He was the pivot of the I. N. A. movement in Malaya though he was not connected with it officially. Bramachari Kailasam was formerly the principal of the National College for Officers' Training in the I. N. A. days. Since taking to politics, he had severed his connection with the Ramakrishna Math to which he originally belonged. He is to-day the man in charge of the Relief Committee of Indians. A bachelor of forty, having no entanglements in life, he engages all his energies in and pays attention to one cause—the cause of Indians in Malaya.

Mr. John Thivy is a Tamilian by birth and a barrister by profession. He is sincere and hardwork-

ing. Sjt. Bose picked him up for the Secretary's post in the Provisional Government of India. He was also a cabinet minister. He is hardly in his forties. The influence of the two Swamijis has had its effect on him. He has given up his profession, which is a lucrative one for any young man in Malaya. Clients stand in ques in every bar-at-law's chamber in Malaya. Mr. Thivy is not a bursting orator but is a silent diplomat. He is a whole time worker in the cause of the Indians in Malaya.

Mrs. Satyavathi Thevar was formerly a staff nurse in the Government Hospital at Seramban. When the Jhansi Regiment was founded, she resigned her post, which was fetching her over Rs. 300 a month. She joined the Jhansi Regiment and within a few months of its inception, she became the commandant of the same. She was holding the rank of a Major and is all energy even to-day in her fifties. Under her, many girls were trained in self defence and military offensive. Many of these Jhansi girls made a mark as being good at bayonet charge and jungle warfare.

Janaki Devi is a girl of dark complexion. At the age of hardly seventeen or eighteen, she led a regiment of Jhansi Boys (I am sorry, Laxmi Boys) to the Burma front. She is now assisting Dr. Desai of the Congress Medical Mission at Kuala Lumpur.

### 247 : Ampang Road

This was the headquarters of the Congress Medical Mission in Malaya. The mission arrived in

Malaya on the 16th of April, '46 and continued its activities, till the 6th of August, '46. The centre in Kuala Lumpur was situated in the premises of the Young Men's Indian Association, Sentul. The Mission was working in eight centres in the different areas of Malaya. The centres are Kotabaru, Sungeipatani, Taiping, Teluk Anson, Raub, Kuala Lumpur, Seramban, and Singapore. Drs. Narde and Datar, Theodore, Majumdar, Sastry, Sinha, Desai, Subodh, and Satyen Chakravorthy were working in the various centres respectively. Each centre was a fixed as well as a mobile unit. From 8 A. M. to 3 P. M. each unit used to work at the fixed centre in the above towns. In the evenings the unit was going round the estates within a radius of 25 miles.

### The Chinese Temple of Virtue

One day we visited the Temple of Virtue in Ampang Road. As is usual in other Chinese temples, a holy priest of a 'Joshi' was sitting in front of the shrine. A lady stepped in, and took some ivory cubes from him. On these cubes were inscribed some letters. She kneeled before the god, and hung down her head with eyes half closed. The hair remained uncombed and was flying over the shoulders. From this prayerful mood she suddenly lifted her head and threw the cubes up into the air. The cubes fell to the ground with redoubled force. I do not know if the letters on the upper faces of the cubes conveyed the meaning of 'yes' or 'no'. She simply repeated the process, and repeated it again



and again untill perhaps she had the desired combination of letters on the cubes. She had the satisfaction and the 'Joshi' had the remuneration. Both were responsible if the prediction were to fail. If the prediction comes true they can congratulate each other and be happy.

In a Chinese temple, God is a life-like statue and the way of worshiping is entirely the Hindu way of doing things. Lighting of wicks soaked in oil in small pans is there. Perfume sticks are these, giving out fragrant fumes. Devotees go round the God in the same manner as Hindus in India do. The prayer hymns are all from Sanskrit. The artistic and colourful carvings and paintings on the four walls inside are all attractive. Circular and rectangular metal discs made of the five metal alloys with triangles and quadrangles etched over them are for sale in the temples. These are to ward off evil. Talismans are popular in the Chinese circles. Their religious beliefs and practices are identical, in every way, with those of the Hindus in India. There is great proximity between the Chinese and the Indians. In many places they live together and adopt each other's children. Adoption of a neighbour's child is the best expression of their intimacy.

### Penang :

Penang is an island city. It is otherwise known as George town. It is separated from the town of Wellesley by a small strip of sea hardly equivalent to the width of any average sized river in India.



Penang, Ipoh, Kuala Lumpur, and Singapore are the four important cities of Malaya. Of these Penang is undoubtedly the most beautiful and Singapore is the biggest. Transport from the land is by steam boat which can carry a dozen lorries and a hundred passengers at a time. Penang port is a lovely one. Penang city standing between a steep hill on one side and the deep sea on the other presents a fine view. The aerodrome is on the top of the hill. The mountain railway is a chain of trolleys pulled up by wires running over pullies. Indian, Indonesian and Chinese shops could be seen in every street corner. Trams in Penang run on rubber tyres and do not run on the ordinary rail lines.

Serpent Temple is within two miles of the town. Living serpents crawl all over but do not bite. Malayan snakes with some rare exceptions are all non-poisonous.

Certain parts of the City, chiefly the public buildings were badly damaged by the aerial bombardment.

64 F. Bishop Street is the office room of Mr. Patel, the jeweller. He is an ardent nationalist and is connected with every type of social and political activities of the Indians in Malaya. He is also the backbone of the Ramakrishna Mission Home in Penang, being its treasurer. He is known in the Indian circles for his honesty, sincerity, and sacrifice. He is a silent worker shunning publicity. He was controlling all matters of finance of the Azad Hind Government, Indian Independence League and also the Azad Hind Bank. Mr. Patel

has got his branches for his business in the distant East, Viz. Sumatra and Borneo.

### Teluk - Anson

Teluk Anson is the headquarters of the Lower Perak District. The town is surrounded on three sides by the Perak river. It is a good river harbour. The river being a short one is a two way river flowing up and down with the ebb and tide of the sea. Lower Perak is one of the most thickly populated areas in the whole of Malaya. There is a clock-tower in the centre of the town, where formerly there used to be a water reservior. There is a Government Hospital of 250 beds. There are about half a dozen private medical practitioners belonging to all nationalities. In short, Teluk Anson seems to have a miniature League of Nations, as Dr. Watson of the same town puts it.

The Indian Association premises were selected as the local centre for the Congres Medical Mission. Dr. Sastry was in charge of the unit. One doctor and one medical assistant from India and 5 honourary assistants locally recruited formed the local unit. The unit was supplied with a 3 ton military truck to visit out-stations daily in the afternoon hours. The hours of work were rather heavy and five hours of sleep a day was a luxury. Outdoor visits to estates and villages had to be carried on in small boats at times, and sometimes even in trollies pushed by the labourers.

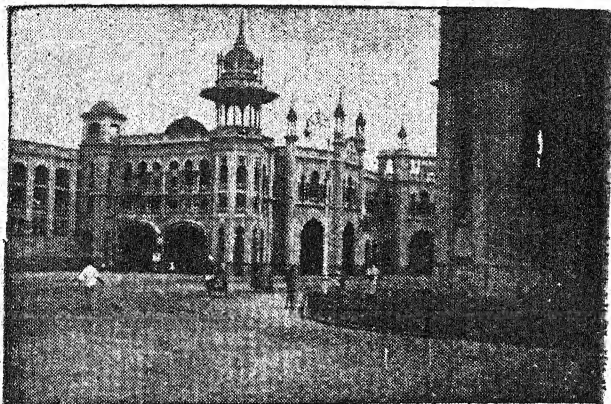
## General Survey of Malaya as a Whole

Malaya is a country 750 miles in length and about 500 miles in width. Three-fourths of the land is covered by wild jungles. Malaya was originally a nobody's land, undeveloped and inhabited only by some aborigines. History says that these aborigines used to flee into the jungles at the sight of any civilised man. Later came the Indonesians who are the present Malays. They are robust and good at agriculture. Malayan land is virgin soil. With sufficient rain-fall the fertile soil yields, year after year, bumper crops. There are neither seasons nor extreme variations of atmospheric temperature in Malaya. Europeans in Malaya want a change of climate every three or four years. The temperature hardly ever goes above 90°. Cool breeze is also very rare and the atmosphere is humid.

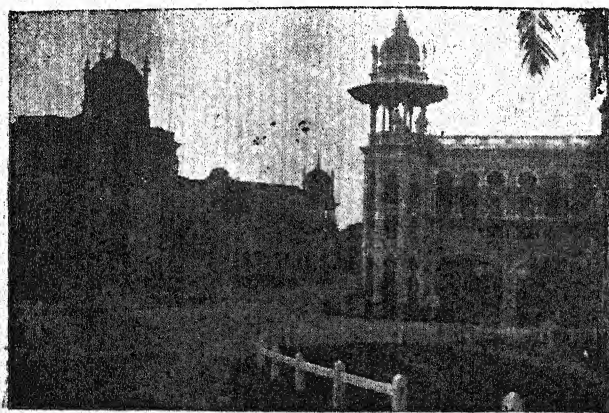
To-day the western coastal zone is developed. From Singapore right upto Alorstar is running a roadline. A metre-guage railway line also runs in the same route. All cities excepting Kota-baru are on the western coast. Every town is connected with power, phone and fine roads. Roads are a speciality to Malaya. They are well constructed and well maintained. These run in a Zig-zag manner and are sometimes very steep and sometimes very deep. The mountainous nature of the country is all beauty to the tourist. On either side of the roads are developed huge estates covering over 500 to 1000 acres each. These estates are mainly rubber and copra estates and are the properties of 'white' vested interests. Each estate

engages about a hundred to four hundred labourers who are mostly Indians. There is the estate staff consisting of a white manger, Indian clerks, teachers and a dresser. All live in the free quarters provided for them in the premises by the proprietors. Cooly lines are awful, a family of a dozen members being asked to live in an area, six feet square. A chain of medical relief centres connects every estate. There is a hospital for each group of estates. These are in turn affiliated to the bigger Government Hospitals in the towns. These relief centres are run by dressers. The dressers are of three categories and correspond to the experienced compounders in India. Medical aid is free to the labourers and is paid for by the estate owners.

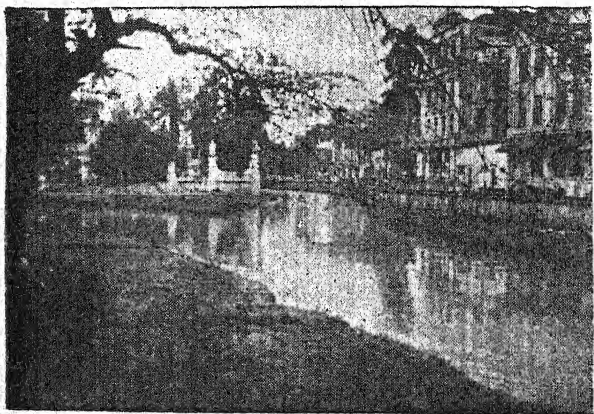
The Malayan administration is divided into States and Settlements. States were ruled originally by the Malayan Sultans. In ancient days piracy was notoriously rampant. The British usurped all the political and sovereign rights from the Sultans by promising protection from pirates and neighbouring rulers. To-day the Sultans are only religious heads and receive annual pensions from the Government. Even the pre-war privilege of Sultans to sign every important document of the State is now taken away from them. The whole administration is centred in the hands of a British resident who is responsible only to the Governor-general. Public administration can claim to represent no one in Malaya. It is responsible only to the British Crown, that is several thousands of miles away. Laws are different in the various states. The title of Sultan is not



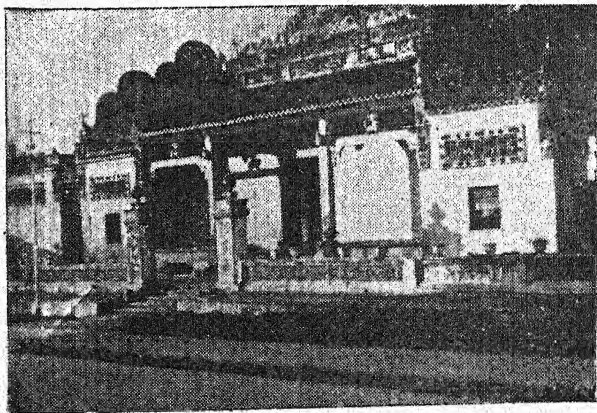
*Railway Station Kuala Lumpur*



*Railway Station Kuala Lumpur*



*River Encircling the Mosque*



*Chinese Temple Kuala Lumpur*

hereditary in some places. The local chieftains elect the Sultan from among the royal family members.

Recently the British administration has proposed to unify the various states under a 'Malayan Union.' They propose to centralise power in Kuala Lumpur its head-quarters, for more effective control. They aim at uniform laws and administration. Singapore will be treated as a separate British dominion, under the new proposals. Singapore continues to be the far eastern military base for the British. Being a commercial centre, it may act as a fine base of exploitation for the vested interests in Malaya. The British military force stationed at Singapore may be a constant threat to any Asiatic nation that comes in the way of these vested interests.

This is how the Malayan Communist party views the situation.

Out of the total Malayan population of about five millions, the Chinese are 23 lakhs Malays are 21 lakhs and Indians form about  $7\frac{1}{2}$  lakhs, according to the '41 census. Political consciousness is just springing up among the Malays. The United Malay National Organisation and the Malay Democratic Union are the two premier political organisations representing them. The U. M. N. O. is backed by the Sultans and it wants the British to stand by treaty rights and return power to the Sultans. It perhaps feels that that procedure is a convenient escape from the Chinese majority in a purely democratic



state of Malaya. The Malayan Democratic Union ropes in all people, Indian, Chinese, Malays and others that are domiciled in Malaya. It aims at evolving a common Malayan Nation. It is a laudable idea. The majority of the Malayan Indian and the Malayan Chinese youngmen have never even seen their motherlands excepting in maps. Their life interest is in Malaya, which is all in all for them. Malay is the common language spoken by all these, since it is simple and charming.

There is a move from an influential section of the Malays that the Malayan democracy shall get absorbed into the greater Indonesia. Malays and Indonesians belong to the same species of human races. Their religion is the same and they intermarry between themselves.

### Education in Malaya

The maximum general education in Malaya is the Cambridge Senior. There is no University. King Edward Medical College and the Raffles College for teachers, are the two premier institutions in Malaya that provide higher education. The former runs the L. M. S. Course of six years' duration after matriculation. The latter provides a three year course after matriculation and trains up teachers. Both these colleges are in Singapore. Kuala Lumpur has got an institution for training draftsmen and overseers. Industrial schools of lesser importance could also be traced in Malaya.

*Public Health* organisation is efficient and rigid in Malaya. Due to the vigilant and strict enforcement

of health rules, the administration is successful within reasonable limits in controlling diseases and epidemics. Patients suffering from infectious diseases are isolated. Every patient who has suffered for more than three days must be referred to the Group Hospital by the individual estate dressers. All serious cases are in turn transferred to the better equipped State Hospitals.

### Public Administration

Though socially Malaya is more advanced than India, politically it is a century behind. There are neither municipalities nor any system of rural self-government. The whole of the administration is influenced by the block of European planters. Registration of property is guided by simple rules and every transaction is to be done through the lawyers. They draft all documents and hence civil litigation is very little, compared to India. An Indian M. A., B. L. is not allowed to practise in Malaya as a lawyer. Only Bar-at-laws from England can practise though they hold no university degrees and their course of studies is atleast three years shorter than that of an Indian B. A., B. L. Before 1937, and Indian M. B., B. S. was only to work as a dresser in Malaya and was debarred by law from practising medicine. Perhaps this is the British sense of justice.

Departmental administration is efficient, since the country is a compact little one. Correspondence is well attended to and does not often go to the waste paper basket as is not uncommon in India.

Public servants are alert in their duties and courteous to the public.

Higher services are divided into two categories—the European and the Asiatic. Europeans hold all the key-posts and draw fatter salaries than the Asiatics. Asiatics are to rot as eternal subordinates on low wages. The limited educated intelligentsia among the Malays are bought off by a few decent posts. Most of the Government servants are provided with Government quarters to live in. These are let out to them at nominal rents.

Rubber and copra are the main products of Malaya. British capital, Indian labour and Chinese commerce have all contributed a good deal in developing the country to the present stage.

### The Malay and His Culture :

Malays generally live in 'Kampangs' (Villages) cultivating their own lands. In Malaya, land is plenty and it is thinly populated. Tempermentally a Malay is a self-contented man. What he wants is a house to live in, food for eating, and clothes to dress. His wants are few. He erects a small wooden house in the little plot of five or ten acres that he owns, and lives in peace. The houses are not close together as is the case in India. But each house is about six feet above the ground level, standing on wooden pillars. In each house there is a faithful dog to keep watch. The Malayan grows rice, vegetables and fruit trees. He takes what he requires and sells the remaining to make a little pocket money. The state puts some restrictions

on the non-Malays and prevents them from growing certain food crops which the Malays grow and live upon. The Government hardly collects any taxes from the Malay agriculturist. Where it collects, it is only a nominal amount.

The Malay is robust and always carries with him a Kirpan as a means of self protection. He is not aggressive unless he is provoked. Islam is his religion. Religious bigotry has no fascination for him. He loves the holiday mood of fishing in the rivers. Many Malays spend their whole lives in *Sampans* (boats) boating and fishing. Woman enjoys equal rights with man. She is modest and faithful. There is a high degree of adaptability in her. Many Indian Muslims have married Malay girls and have settled in Malaya. Malays have an aversion for the congested towns. Even if other walks of life are more paying, a Malay does not willingly leave his traditional *Kampang* home and go for something else.

Malays were at one time Hindus. Though they have changed their religion in the medieval ages, they are still retaining till today some of their ancient traditional customs that reflect their past glory.

Their language is rich in Sanskrit words though the script is Arabic. Their marriage customs resemble the typical South Indian Hindu marriage customs. Plantain trees are cut and are used to decorate the doorways of the marriage house. Garlands of leaves adorn the roof of the house and also the

doorways. Caste marks are made on the fore-heads of the new couple with the sacred oil. The sacred fire and the flour designs on the earth, are all there.

Ear rings, nose rings, finger rings and bangles are all identical in fashion and design with those worn by the Hindus in South India. The colouring of the palms and soles of ladies and children with leaf-juice is a common custom to India, Malaya and Indonesia. 'Sree' and 'Rajah' are universal titles used before the names of the members of the Royal families of Malaya.

'Sree Arjuna' was the name of a theatre that I visited in Teluk Anson. Arjuna with the bow was painted on the curtain. The Malayan stage is the protonym in many respects of the Indian stage. The manner of action is identical. Stories mostly depict the history of ancient rulers and their valour in capturing pirates. Piracy and stage fights with swords have got a special appeal to the Malay public. Music is not usually mixed up with the story proper. In the intervals between scene and scene chorus dance songs with fine orchestral side-music is played. I saw a Malayan drama that resembled our 'Bilvamangal.' In it a Malayan father sends his son to England for higher studies. Because of the more free environment of the Western way of life, the boy takes to wine and women. His father becomes a bankrupt because of the prodigal son and also because of the obnoxious interest that the greedy Chettiar charges. The son returns home. The Chettiar that was all courtesy, when he lent the money is now most discourteous and

strict to him. The whole property is auctioned and the family is now completely ruined.

'Ronging' and 'Opera' are the two types of the Malayan dances. Ronging is an open air dancing. This is a dual dance but the two partners do not touch each other. The movement is to and fro on the stage. There is no symmetry in dancing, but timing and stepping are to be maintained. The tuning of the violin varies. '*Tala*' goes to the higher metre. Steps become brisk, the chorus song goes to higher pitch and the whole dance stops in a final climax. Partners part bidding adieu to each other.

Opera dance is a group dance having only choric songs.

The Malay ladies wear lungees, jackets, and transparent muslim veils over the shoulders. Smoking is not a taboo to them. They have a liking for printed but variegated, lungees. The printings on their dresses depict fine river and boat - scenes. On ceremonial occasions men put on their classical dresses, consisting of lungees worn over pants, and shirts with long and wide sleeves.

Bali dances were originally of Indonesian origin. Bali is a small island in the Indonesian group of islands. The population is about three lakhs, mostly Hindus. Bali is famous for its dances which are adopted by all the Malay dancers. These dances are popular all over Malaya. The dancers, with artistic paper fans in their hands, and the beautiful

screen of palm groves, and the coastal curves of the sea in the background, convey deep and lasting impressions on the minds of the audience. Bali, in Indonesia, is as famous for its art as Manipuri in Assam, and Kuchipudi in Andhra.

### The Chinese Customs and Their Faiths

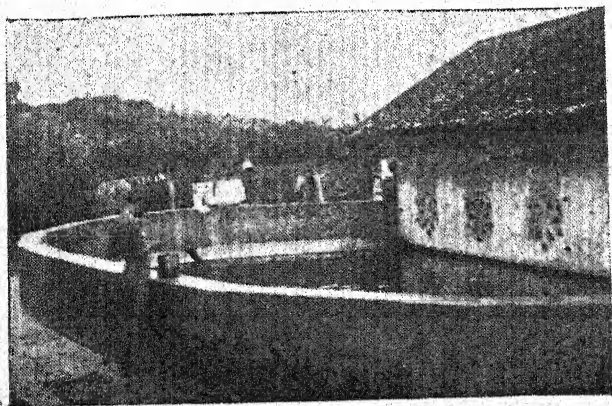
The Chinese form the single majority community of Malaya. They are by nature townsmen and tradesmen. Even kiddies in their fives, are trained up in shopping. Business aptitude seems to be hereditary to them. Even a child, ignorant of the fundamentals of addition and subtraction, is kept at the door with a pan of cigarettes or some packets of groundnuts before him. He knows only that a cigarette or a packet of groundnuts cost a five cent note. He frankly refuses to worry himself about the intricacies of changing the bigger notes and sticks to his no change policy. Almost every Chinese house is either an eating shop or a cigarette stall. Some Chinese have invested their moneys in rubber estates. It is surprising to note that the Chinese, who are so commercially minded are the last to take to any productive industries. An average Chinese labourer is hard-working and sincere in his work. He is a member of the organised labour union. He demands decent wages and sticks to his contract terms. He prefers to work in a group on contract basis rather than on daily wages.

The Chinese social reformers of the younger generation have brought about distinct progress in





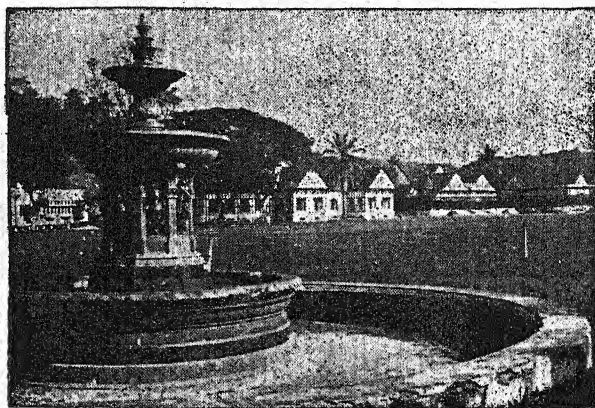
*Malay Mosque Kuala Lumpur*



*Sulphur Springs Sentul Kuala Lumpur*



*Business Quarters Kuala Lumpur*



*European Club Kuala Lumpur*

the Chinese circles in recent years. The long tails of hair are today a forgotten feature of men and women. Ladies have all got bobbed hair; but curlings and other artificial beauty get-ups are absent today. Lipsticks, face powders and scents are not in popular use now-a-days. Wooden sandals are cheap and form a good protection against disease that is an inevitable corollary to barefooted walking. Chinese can not only walk but also run on these woden blocks. The classical dress of dark colours and long sleeves that used to make it so difficult for men and women to be distinguished, is out of fashion to-day. The all-black mourning dress is now replaced by the simple black armbands of the modern Chinese. Ladies wear pyjamas and jackets that hardly consume five yards, and cost half as much as the Indian saree. Tying of feet in little baby boots that prevent the growth of the feet, is also given up. Their soap consumption is pretty high. They soak their clothes in boiling water, apply enough of soap and wash them well. Their clean and well-ironed clothes suggest as if each one of them is a trained dhobi. The present-day Chinese labourer has developed a clean way of life.

*Samsu*, the crude home-made alcohol extracted from rice, is still popular among the Chinese. They take *samsu* in limited doses. It is an age long custom with them to serve a small quantity of well fermented thirty year old liquors. But these are served only in minimum doses. Almost every living creature on earth can form a delicious dish to the Chinese. They are so enamoured of the pig, that

each pig costs about 250 rupees. It is said that a sect of the Chinese, who wear ebonite bangles, eat frogs and snakes too.

Once a Chinese friend of mine remarked that if a Chinese eats one dollar worth at home, he eats two dollars worth in the way-side cafe or hotel. They eat in small quantities at a time, but every hour their jaws chew something. Daily at twelve in the midnight a hawker used to pass by the side of my lodging making a tik-tak-tak sound with two little wooden sticks. He used to come pushing a four-wheeled cart in which is stored '*Mia*' a Chinese delicacy. Ladies drop a ten cents note in a fancy little bucket from the roadside window in the first floor to draw it up with what the hawker fills in return. That is the final sip before the night's happy sleep.

Porcelain bricks with pleasing designs on all the four sides are still used by some Chinese as pillow stones. Hospitality to guests is considered religious by the Chinese and this custom is being carried on from generation to generation with the same old sacred zeal.

The whole of the Chinese community in Malaya is today crazy after organisation. The best of the organisations are to be found among the Chinese youth. From the village right up to the town the various common economic interests are organised separately and individually. Organisation is strength. The strength of the organisation lies in the co-operation of the individual with the society. The Chinese seem to have realised this necessity.

They pay their subscriptions regularly and never miss a function conducted by their organisation. The subscription to the various labour organisations is only fifty cents per month (As. 12.). Communists have played a good role in organising the labour. Each organisation has its club premises which is a Reading Room cum Lecture Hall. In the Lecture Hall is arranged an elevated platform and an enclosure resembling that arranged for the magistrates in the Indian courts. Chinese flags as well as the red flags are hung in the halls. They are also hoisted over the buildings. Photos of Sunyat Sen, Stalin and Chiang Kai Shek are erected behind the speaker's seat. Every club has an orchestra and the members practise choric songs on national themes. The tunes sung are all western.

On the May day I had been to Seramban, a town forty miles from Kuala Lumpur. All through our way we saw several thousands of Chinese men, women and children parading, singing national songs. There was an unprecedented enthusiasm in every labourer's heart. National flags peeping through the upper windows of every house, seemed to have compensated for the proverbial snub noses of the Chinese inhabitants inside. Choric songs and slogans were radiating high into the skies. Public meetings were held everywhere. I felt I was not lucky enough to have a camera with me. Hotels are mostly run by the Chinese. The rates are high but the comforts are not liberal. The Chinese have an auspicious time for marriages. That is the Sunday at twelve in the noon which is the zero

hour for the happy couple. Chinese are still retaining the ancient Hindu cults of 'Tantra' and 'Mantra'. They still believe in the efficacy of the psychic art of chanting and drawing key syllables in squares over triangles on tiny five-metal alloy discs. These discs when worn round the necks are said to ward off evil.

In my centre a patient was being treated for paresis of limbs. He improved markedly but to my surprise he stopped treatment and resorted to the psychic therapy elsewhere. After a time he came back to get himself examined. He said that my medicine could cure only the superficial disease outside. For the deeper disease that is in the bones, he was undergoing 'ghost-therapy'.

One fine morning an aged man came with a perma grip. He complained of the devil's mischief when he went to the burial ground the previous night. Even when he knocks out, the devil would not leave his grip. I told him that I too had been to the burial ground and brought with me a bigger ghost dissolved in water. I enquired if he brought a big bottle to take the big ghost and gave him salicylas mixture. We used to dispense mixture for three days at a time. On the fourth day he complained that the ghost was killed but not eaten up; though he was far better than before he was not absolutely cured.

Polygamy is a standing disgrace to some Chinese *thowkies*. There are men having even ten wives. Their death means a festival to the bar-at-law,

His share is a major one and perhaps he gets a bigger share than any of the innumerable widows. The *thowkie's* house of dignity and grandeur collapses like a house of cards. What remains after him is nothing but scandal, bad blood, litigation and disgrace. The average Chinese is free from this vice of polygamy.

Perhaps a rich polygamist can claim some advantages too! His different families in the different towns can have better control over his divergent estates and properties.

The Japanese and the Chinese have a common figurative script. Every article on earth has a figure assigned to it. Every word is a picture. This hieroglyphical alphabet runs into thousands. Though the script is common, the dialects are varied and different. They are three in China and one in Japan. Young China has evolved a new common standard dialect that is simpler. It is the Manderin.

The Chinese use the brush and the Indian-Ink block to paint their figures. These run from top to bottom in vertical lines.

Palm hats with their edges one foot wide are a real protection against the sun. Palm-leaved umbrellas which are about five feet in diameter and have no supporting sticks are worn directly over the head. Their sloping edges and the protruding centre protect man from any severe rain. Unlike the more elegant modern umbrella, they can resist the sweeping forces of the winds and heavy draughts.



If one is sincere, the Chinese will be his best and trusted friend. If he plays with him, he will retaliate bitterly, for his sense of revenge is too deep. It seems as if skinning alive was his popular punishment to the Jap aggressor in China.

### Indians in Malaya

An Indian in Malaya means a labourer since 90% of the Indians there are labourers. They work in rubber estates as tappers. They collect cocoanuts in the cocoanut estates. They are paid on the average about a dollar a day each. Each labourer has got some dependants as in India. He has carried all the way to Malaya his toddy habit. This has greatly reduced his working capacity. He is disorganised and hence cannot put his claims before his master effectively. He is illiterate and ignorant. He is controlled by maistries who form the middlemen between the employers and the employees. They take overhead commissions from both and live by 'Jabardasti'. They divert the attention of the labourer in all possible wrong directions such as wine, woman and warbling dice. The estate staff and dressers pilfer their share from the labourer's wages. The Chinese shop-keeper snatches his share in a silent and unnoticed way. The hours of work for an Indian labourer are from 8 A. M. to 2 P. M. Evening hours could be utilised for rearing cows, growing vegetables and tilling the land which he can have free of rent and without restriction too. Where he works, he is happy and contented.

The price of cloth having shot up very very

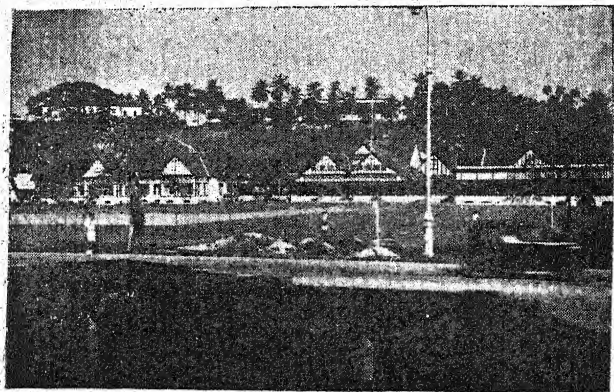
high in the all-round black-market, a yard of it consumes a week's wages. In view of the low purchasing value of the dollar his present day wages are hardly equivalent to seven annas a day. The price of rice ranges upto Rs. 120/- a bag and prejudice prevents him from taking to wheat or any other food. A cup of coffee or tea costs about twelve annas. The minimum denomination in the vegetable market is a ten cent note ( $2\frac{1}{2}$  annas). Next to the Chinese mother, the Indian mother has got the maximum number of children. Every working labourer has his lazy dependants too to hang on him. How many times, did I find our poor unfortunate brother going round with torn jute rags! Some of them are suffering for years together from ulcers for want of medicine.

An Indian labourer is accused of having a low working capacity, and of being insincere in his work. On that plea he is paid the least and exploited the most. How can a starving man with a hungry stomach be expected to work better? whatever one may say in his own interests, one cannot accuse the Indian labourer of deceit and dishonesty. He has a contempt for stealing and for gang-robbery. He is a man of principles.

The down-trodden economic state of the Indian labourer has driven him to the desperate extent of taking to toddy to forget his worries. He has come to blame fate for every injustice heaped on him. After the war some of our I. N. A. boys have gone to the estates and are organising the labour. They are themselves working as coolies and are turning

out excellent work in anti-illiteracy drive and anti-drink drive. The Indian labourers are to-day in a formidable fortress of organisation every where. Strength is within and does not come from without. The younger generations of labourers are the cream of youth. They are the pride of the nation. They are moulding up the Indian labour community faster. They are not addicted to alcoholic drinks and they are preventing the elders from drinking. Every one of them is an ardent nationalist and believes in the brilliant future of his nation. He has sacrificed much and suffered heavily in the I. N. A. days. Let 'Jai Hind' greet him heartily.

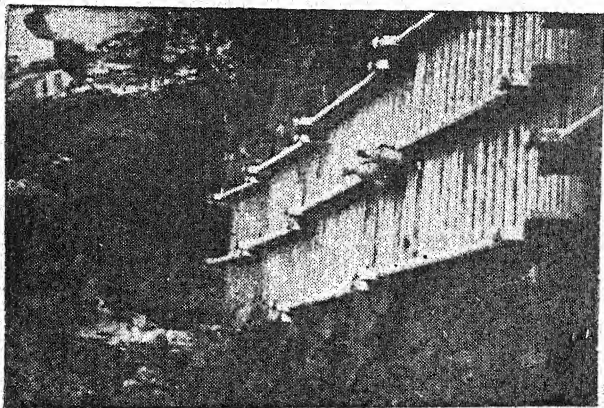
Though the Indian labourers in Malaya are organising themselves now a days, the planters too are not slow in their counter-moves aimed at crushing the spirit of the labourers. In Kelantan and Krengan areas the Planters' Association has decided to close down any estate indefinitely when the labour resorts to a strike. The Association collectively bears the loss incurred by the individual estate. This is a stab in the back to the Indian labourer. Unfortunately even the Indian Chettiars and Chinese thowkies that hold small estates have allied themselves with the European planters in their decision. Even if the whole labour force of Malaya strikes work, the planters can still afford to carry on without work. They have heavy reserves that they saved all these years. For every dollar paid to a labourer the planter gained seven to eight dollars. 25% used to be the net return on his



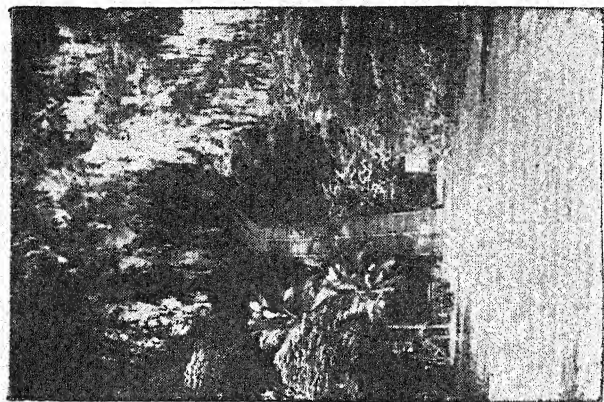
*European Club Kuala Lumpur*



*Chinese Street Vendor Kuala Lumpur*



*Batu Caves Kuala Lumpur*



*Batu Caves Kuala Lumpur*

investment. But this state of affairs cannot go on for ever. As the labourer becomes more and more self-conscious, the capitalist cannot but yield. The sooner he realises this the better; for otherwise he will have to quit the field with bag and baggage for good.

Most of the Indians in Malaya are from South India. Ramaswamy, Arunachalam and Simhachalam are all common names. The labourers in the cocoanut estates are mostly Telugu people and those in the rubber estates are Tamilians. Both speak Tamil and live as if they were of one family. They intermarry amongst themselves. All the village gods of South India are imported into Malaya. Mariamma temple is a common temple. Temples are erected in many of the wayside estates. Annual village festivals are conducted. Offerings are made to gods on occasions of epidemics. Chettiars have erected Subrahmanya temples wherever they went. Subrahmanya is the god of serpents. Chettiars seem to be having some special attachment to this god. The Chettiar maintains his home-dress even in Malaya. The 'dhoti' with a cylindrical turning round his waist is there. His forehead, chest and arms are smeared with the holy ashes. The golden borders on his upper cloth make a glittering contrast to his swarthy complexion. His grim face is a nightmare to many a debtor. He is a man not of principle but of principal and interest. He is all courtesy when he lends money but very curt when he collects his interest. He is not worried half so much about his



capital as he is about his interest! Compulsory collections of heavy taxes during the I. N. A. days have made all these Chettiers, patriots that sacrificed heavy sums.

Having come to Malaya, Indians have entirely forgotten caste, having developed a common community. A Brahmin, Christian and a Mudaliar are all one socially. They live together in perfect harmony. Hitherto Indians kept themselves aloof from the internal affairs of the Chinese and the Malays and have kept the balance between the two in an even manner. Indians in Malaya have all developed a common language for themselves--Tamil. Malay being a simple language with little grammar, has become the Lingua Franca for all the three major communities of Malaya viz. Malays, Chinese and the Indians. Punjabi Sikhs with their characteristic beards, are commonly known in Malaya as Bengalees, though the Punjab is as far from Bengal as Malaya is from Bengal. This was probably due to two causes. Long ago the western coast of Malaya was under the administrative jurisdiction of the governor of Bengal. Secondly all northern Indians that come to Malaya leave India from the port of Calcutta which is in Bengal. Bengalees residing in Malaya are numerically very few. Indians in Malaya are generally honest and do not participate in gang-robbery and dacoities that are so prevalent today in Malaya. Even the European managers in the estates speak highly of the honesty of the Indian labourer.



## Rubber and Copra

The State granted land originally free to the planters on the express condition that the jungles should be cleared and the estates developed within specified periods. Limited companies were floated with the British, Dutch and the Chinese capital, and plantations were started. Indian labour was imported and Chinese businessmen were encouraged to settle down in Malaya. The returns on the rubber and the copra estates went up to as high as 25% per annum to the investors. Roads were developed; telephone, power and water connections were established. When the Indian labour was a vital necessity for the development of Malaya the British shipping concerns brought the Indian labourer to Malaya for a low deck fare of 12 to 16 rupees per head. But now when the labour shortage is acute in Malaya, and when the Indian labourers want to return home after a long lapse of six to seven years, the shipping companies demand upto 100 rupees per head deck passage.

The Indian labour was imported under the Immigration Act, the rules of which were not favourable to the poor Indian labourer that is brought a thousand miles away from his homeland and that too on sea. The Immigration Act says that the employer can dispense with the services of the labourer after giving a month's notice or a month's pay instead. The labourer too can leave the service of the estate after giving a month's notice. Either way it is only the labourer that suffers. The wretched wages that the helpless

Indian labourer was getting, would not enable him and his family to go back to his home country. After thirty years of service, when he is sent out for his incapacity to work as before, he has no house of his own to live in. For every dollar paid to the labourer, the estate makes a net profit of four to five dollars. The wages paid to the labourer would never help him to have his own house or even a morsel of food in the evening of his life. While he was still in his active life he was being humiliated as no labourer in the world has ever been. I know a Dutch estate where the labourer had to pull down his umbrella, remove his hat, get down from the bike and walk on the footpath, as soon as he entered the estate premises. If he happens to pass by the manager's car, he must leave the road and walk on the roadside slopes. It is even said that if any brownie were to touch his car the manager would pay him off and send him out of service. This is nothing short of Shintoism. But now-a-days, after the Jap regime, the days of blind reverence to the white 'angel' is gone. Labour is getting organised. It is getting better treatment and is destined to get better wages. An engineer friend of mine living in Malaya for the last thirty years, once told me his observations of Malayan labour life thirty years ago. Indian labourers were engaged in clearing the jungles in deep valleys and the white managers used to rush to the spots on horse-backs to kick the tired labourer for his sluggishness, with the stirrups. They are all days of the past. That past history, however shows to the world how much

Indian labour has contributed to the present glory and riches of Malaya.

Malay natives were given exclusive privileges for growing food crops and were not taxed as a rule. Where taxes were at all collected from them they were nominal. The Malay is silenced with these concessions since he is by nature economically unambitious, and politically immature. He has no aptitude for business; and good businessmen among the Malays are very rare. He does not like to work under others, even if he can get much more than what he is getting by plodding in his little plot of ground. This is due to prejudice and ill-conceived notions of life. The Malay soon lost the field of commerce and labour. The Chinese began to pour down literally into Malaya, with the result that today they form the single majority community. They are hardworking, sincere and organised. Hence they soon found an easy way to labour. Being born-businessmen, they captured—even swallowed, the Malayan big business. The British planter, shrewd as he is, created the middle-man of a Chinese agent to speculate in his rubber and export to the British industrialist, at home. Hence in the common man's belief a good portion of the blame for exploiting Malaya went to the poor Chinese businessman.

Each rubber estate is usually of 500 to 1000 acres in extent. Trees are planted in rows, the minimum distance between one another being about twenty feet. Each tree is about 15 feet high and is a cylindrical trunk. Five years is ususally the

minimum period allowed for the tree to grow before it is tapped. The uniform 90° temperature all through the year and the heavy rainfall are all ideal for the rubber tree plantations in Malaya. The trunk of the rubber tree is two feet in diameter. Tapping is done in a slanting groove about one foot long, six inches wide and one inch deep. Below the lower edge of this cut, is fixed to the trunk a wire ring in which an earthen receptacle is placed. Each tree is tapped on alternate days. When the cups are filled with the latex, the latex is poured into the buckets.

At the factory the latex is transferred into rectangular cement tubs and acid is added in order to promote coagulation. It takes about twelve to forty-eight hours for the coagulation to take place. This time depends on the percentage and the quantity of the acid used. Metal sheets are hung in the tubs in order to prepare separate rubber sheets instead of a single block of rubber.

These rubber sheets are pressed through metal rollers and later dried up. They are hung in the smoke chambers and smoked to the desired tinge. The smoke chamber resembles our tobacco barn. Rubber sheets are hung over bamboos at different levels separately, and the doors of the chamber are closed. Smoke from a hearth is passed from below. These smoked rubber sheets are ultimately cut to size and the air bubbles are nipped. The sheets are packed into bales covered with a rubber sheet that is well dusted with chalk powder, and the bales are exported.

Though Malaya is the key production centre for rubber in the world, it is amazing why finished products are not made in this country. Rubber is exported and tyres are imported at an unreasonably high price. The reason is not far to seek. If the tyre or any other industry is started in this country, the demand for labour may go high. With it the wages also may shoot up. The cost of production of rubber will necessarily rise. Labour in the European countries where the industry is at its zenith now, will then, have to close down.

Malaya is a country recently developed. In the process of clearing the jungles many unfortunate Indian labourers have become victims of malaria, filaria, asthma and rheumatism. Tropical ulcers and yaws are also sapping the vitality of the people. Free quarters and free medical aid are noteworthy features of the labour life in Malaya. Though primary education is to be provided for the children of the labourers free by the estates, the teachers are paid such low wages, that the whole scheme is reduced to a big farce. A teacher gets less than what a labourer gets—a real penalty for his education and brains! What interest can a starving teacher take in the training up of the future citizens of Malaya? He naturally tries to depend for his maintenance more on the generosity of the cooly than on the reasonableness of the estate boss.

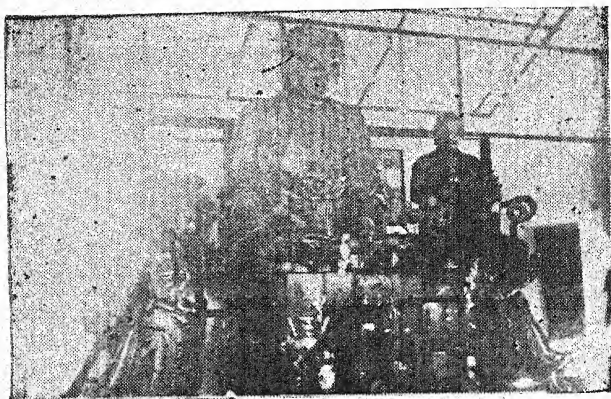
Next to rubber, the second by venture of the Europeans in Malaya is the development of the copra estates. Now a days copra estates are fetching greater dividends than rubber estates. Into

the interior corners of the estates are running trolley lines, to collect the cocoanuts. Each estate engages approximately one to four hundred labourers. Copra and rubber estates are mostly run on Indian labour. Just as in the rubber estates, in the copra estates also there are smoke chambers. But these are slightly different in structure and purpose. A bamboo attic is erected about six feet from the floor. Cocoanuts are cut and are arranged in rows over the bamboo blades. The fibre and the shell are spread in a line on the floor and set fire to. The heat and the smoke separate the copra from the shell. The copra is removed and the shell with its fibre is used again to be burnt on the floor.

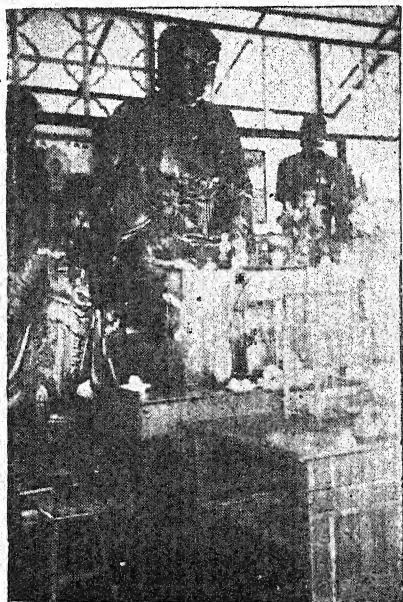
One peculiar feature of the estates in Malaya is the dog. Dogs are regularly reared in the estates, and in large numbers too. There are special hospitals for them. Dogs are reared not only to be watch-guards but also as a measure against the rat nuisance. They make a sure alarm at the first sight of a sly smuggler or a thief. Not only the estates but almost every house in Malaya has a dog.

### Mines and Metals

Tin mining is a speciality in Malaya. Tin is available in abundance and its mining is an easy process. Tin mining is of two types, the open method and the closed method. In the open method earth is simply dug out by the coolies, and is washed in different tubs placed at different levels. The heavy and crude particles of tin sink to the

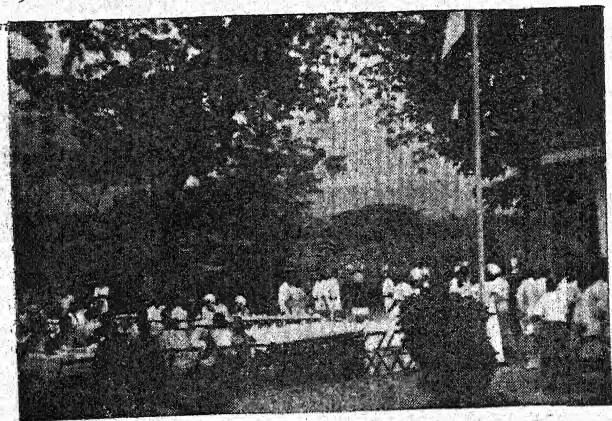


*Lord Buddha in a Chinese Temple Kuala Lumpur*

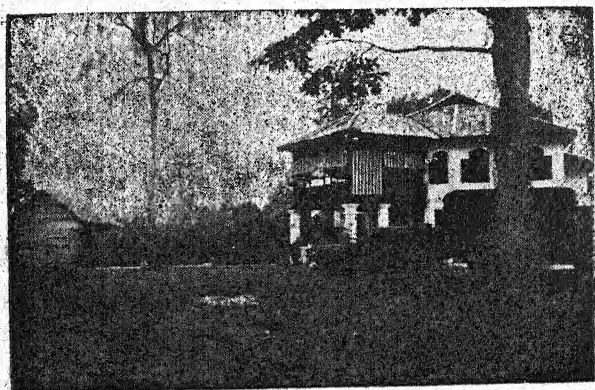


*Lord Buddha in a Chinese Temple Kuala Lumpur*





*Reception to Congress Mission  
(Young Men's Indian Association Sentul)*



*Head-quarters Congress Medical Mission  
247-Ampang Road Kuala Lumpur*

bottom. This tin dust is collected and exported abroad. This is a laborious process which requires heavy daily expense. It is not very economical.

The other is the closed method. A huge mining boat is placed on a piece of land, which is rich in the metal required. This boat has got a big chain of heavy trolley-like buckets rolling over pulleys. The machine in the ship rotates this chain with such force that the buckets go sixty feet down the ground and bring out the earth at the other end. The bucket goes back to a height of thirty feet from the ground in order to take a steep dip into the pit below. While it is coming down it will pour out the mud with water into the rectangular tubs placed on the sides. This earth is washed and percolated. The tin dust at the base is collected and exported. Sometimes where they are found in sufficiently large quantities, gold and other metals are also separated by refined methods of sedimentation. Soon the boat begins to float in the tank dug out by itself. Trolleys run to the nearest railway station taking heavy loads of tin. It is estimated that each boat may cost about forty to fifty lakhs of rupees.

The town of Raub stands on a mine of gold. Raub gold mine is the biggest in Malaya. The mining company is the property of the Australians. Before the Jap invasion the mine was flooded and was made inoperative for the enemy. It is presumed that it may take two years more for the mine to be put in working order.

## Palm Oil in Malaya

The British Home Government has recently announced that the total quantity of palm oil produced in Malaya is being exported to England. There are several palm estates and palm oil mills in Malaya. 'Jenderetta' estate in Perak District is one of the biggest palm oil centres in Malaya. There is heavy demand for this oil all over the world and particularly in America for its vitamin value.

Palm oil is the best known vegetable substitute for codliver oil. Though it has comparatively less of Vitamin D than codliver oil, it is atleast ten times more concentrated in Vitamin A content. During the Jap days many Indian labourers used to make this oil and live by selling it. The specific gravity of the oil is high and hence it is not a suitable medium for cooking food. Due to the scarcity of other oils during the Jap days, this oil had to be used by the people of Malaya for cooking purposes. The common people of Malaya were calling this oil 'Jenderetta Japan petrol'. After the return of the British regime, heavy restrictions and controls are placed on the sale of this oil in Malaya. I was informed from a reliable source that this vitamin oil is being used in the British tin industry, perhaps for polishing the tin sheets.

Tropical ulcer is a common malady peculiar to Malaya. The Malays and the Chinese are the chief victims. The basic factor behind this disease is the underlying vitamin deficiency. I have made

a routine internal administration of palm oil in all ulcer cases and the results were very satisfactory. There are people suffering from ulcers for a long number of years in Malaya today. Palm oil costs only eight dollars for a four gallon drum and is much cheaper than codliver oil. It is more efficacious than the other in the treatment of tropical ulcers. Codliver oil is to be imported from abroad and is now not adequately available in Malaya. Between health and industry, health is more important. Hence the Malayan administration must see that this precious oil is immediately released for public sale without any departmental restrictions.

### The Jap Misrule in Malaya

When the Japs were marching into Malaya, their equipment was meagre. It was mostly the armaments purchased from the Allies before the war, or robbed from them during the war. The Jap soldier is a man of strong build though of a short stature. Endurance is his special trait. The personnel of the suicidal squad were all men of good stature. Their grim heavy faces and penetrating red looks are a spectacle of terror to many. They care very little for other's lives and as a matter of fact even for their own. Their personal kit is very limited. Each soldier is supplied with a cycle fitted with hard rickshah tyres, and rations sufficient for three days. To the longitudinal bar of his cycle is attached a sub-machine gun. To the handle bar are attached rings of meat and coils of 'Semia'. Behind, on the carrier, are placed some cocoanuts

to quench his thirst. A long sword is always hid in his sheath. With this paraphernalia he silently emerges out of the jungle and stations himself at the centre of the four corners. He stops any man riding a motor car or a bike and presents to his new acquaintance his own bike in exchange for the costlier machine. The Nippon carries on his further mission with the newly acquired vehicle. Where he finds a dwelling house, he enters either through the backdoor or the kitchen. He respectfully bows down, keeps his shoes at the gate, and shows all his natural formalities of courtesy. Whatever he demands, it must be given ungrudgingly. If his request is satisfactorily meted out, he is all faithful. Otherwise the threat of his revolver will have all things done for him.

The Jap is famous for his jungle warfare. In the strategy of jungle warfare, and in the matter of endurance in adverse circumstances, none can surpass him. At Bagandatoh port, the British were pointing all their guns towards the sea and were eagerly waiting for the Japs to face them. But the cunning Japs landed in petty boats on inconspicuous riverside jungles. From behind they cut off all communications and one fine morning while it was still misty and dark, the notorious Jap was holding the British gun positions.

The Japs brought monkies with them and they were as cunning as the Japs themselves. They climb up the long rubber trees and weep at the sight of any soldier in non-Jap uniform. If their enemies are in limited numbers, the Japs would pounce upon

them. If they happen to be in their hundreds, the Japs would retreat silently into the jungles. Trained dogs were also brought by the Japs, which at the waving of the Jap little finger, would bite away a piece of flesh from the thigh of any prisoner of war.

On one occasion, ignorance of the English language purged the Japs. On a way side estate between Bagandatoh and Teluk Anson, a batch of Jap soldiers entered the estate dispensary and snatched away some chocolates. They were furious when the dresser entreated them in English not to eat them. They ate up all the British laxative chocolates which soon upset their stomachs. Having lost their temper they demanded an explanation from the poor Indian dresser for poisoning. The frightened dresser bawled out "British-no good-Chocolate-stools." One of the Jap officers who was passing that way luckily intervened and the dresser's head was after all left in tact.

While the British were loading their lorries with evacuees and ammunition, the Japs were found loading their lorries on the Bagandatoh road with cocoanuts. When enquired by the inquisitive Indians on the estate why cocoanuts were being carried, 'to quench thirst' was the ready reply of the Jap officer. But all the lorries were being driven towards Singapore only. As a matter of fact the cocoanuts went before the troops advanced. All the British troops in Singapore were alert, having made the best of naval fortifications. Singapore is an island connected with the southern

coast of Malaya. The tricky Japs threw all the cocoanuts into the sea in the dark hours of the night. To the British flash lights each seemed to be a Jap head. The British were all alert, and opened fire on these innumerable 'Jap heads'. The 'Japs' lost their 'heads' while the British their gun powder. Singapore was an easy walk-over for the Japs.

The Jap civilians had the highest culture and courtesy. They were all educated and cultured, literacy being over 99% amongst them. Their manner of receiving guests was most cordial. In every one of their shops, the customer gets the best of treatment. Their way of life was artistic. Their sense of duty was proverbial. They had the highest regard for law and order. A Jap disobeying law in any foreign land was practically unheard of. He was always simple and frugal. Neatness was next to godliness to him.

The Jap imperial soldier has forgotten all this golden heritage. He has come to acquire a barbarous soul. To him civilisation seemed to be a thing sinister. Honesty, the national virtue of Japan, has flown to the skies. Corruption and pilfering became too common. He was unruly and could not be controlled. He felt he was greeting others by slapping them. Humiliating others and torturing them was a pleasant craze to him. Every Nippon soldier behaved as if he were a policeman, judge and the executioner all in one. To terrorise the public, he beheaded innumerable innocent people and hung their bodies in every street



corner. He was supplied with specialised instruments to torture the public. 'Punishment first and enquiry next' seemed to be his policy. In any case the suspect must prove his innocence. The Military Police could never err.

Torture with the hose-pipe was an usual method of punishment meted out by the Jap soldier. The Nippon puts the tube into the throat of the victim and forces water in, till the belly belches out. A plank is placed on the belly and the soldier plays 'sea-saw' on it. People are hung to the trees in a topsyturvy fashion and they are thrashed till they lose their consciousness. Cold water is then sponged on their heads and when they regain consciousness, the process of torture is repeated afresh. In every town 'Chambers of Hell' were established. If a man were to be taken in, God only knows the fate that awaits him. There were only oneway gates. They allow the living in and the dead out. Sometimes the victim's nails were dissected out from the nailbeds. Such horrors were being perpetuated in that 'hell'.

Jap troops used to drink heavily. Raping was as common and natural a habit to them as taking a glass of beer or water. Soon by their barbarous acts, the Japs lost Asia's hope and confidence; they soon became Asia's target of contempt and hatred. They were then the victors, but they soon lost the first round of the war by fore-going the confidence of the public. There was something fundamentally wrong in the philosophies and training of the twentieth century Japanese. To

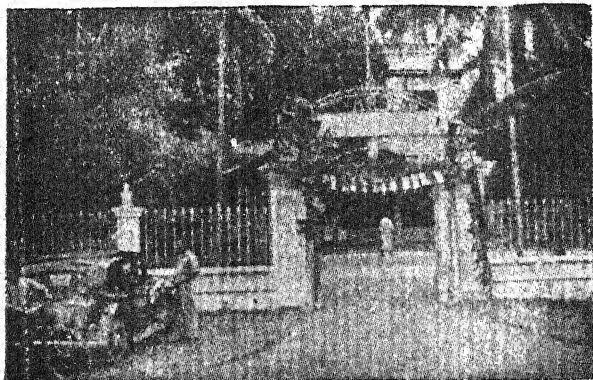
the Jap the ruler is the direct descendant of God and hence His representative on earth. He is a dummy and has no power. Being God he is above politics. Hence the power is vested in the premier who is often the military man. Power politics were running high in Japanese political life resulting in innumerable political murders. At a fixed time in the day every man, Jap or non-Jap must turn towards the Emperor's palace and pray. To die for the emperor was the sole life-ambition of the Jap soldier. He believed that every Jap is superior to a non-Jap. His language of expression is one to the Jap and another to the non-Jap. During the fascist regime in Japan it was not only the poor Jap at home but also the neighbouring Asiatic nationals that fell a prey to the Jap lust for empire and to their craze of the Herrenvolk.

This fascist Jap machinery of administration was encouraged and finally provoked into action by the Anglo-American greedy policy of economic restrictions and commercial strangulation. Raw materials were denied to the Japs and markets were closed to them. While doing these things, the Allies armed Japan before war with the hope that one day she may fight some other supposed foe. But as was the case with Germany, here too, their action recoiled against them.

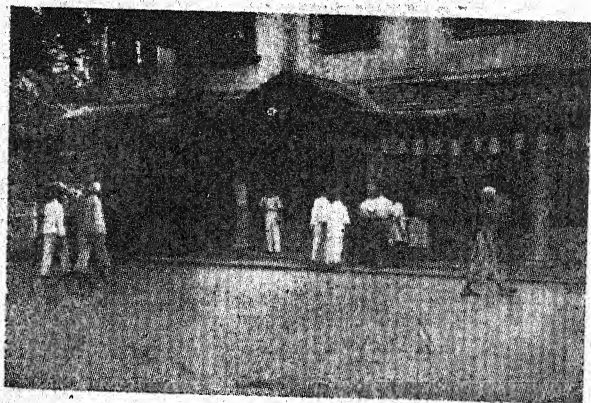
Imperialism, of whatever type it might be will necessarily lead the world into a series of constant wars till it is itself smashed.



*Congress Medical Mission Kuala Lumpur*



*Malayan Indian Conference  
Chettiar Hall Kuala Lumpur*



*MALAYAN INDIAN CONFERENCE*



*MALAYAN INDIAN CONFERENCE*

## The Mockery of Currency

After their withdrawal from Malaya, the British began to dump Malaya with counterfeit Jap notes distributed from the planes. They aimed at destroying the Jap economic system. The communists in Malaya also printed some notes in the jungles and brought them into circulation. With these manoeuvres the Jap dollar that was hitherto having the value of the British dollar for the first half of the Jap regime, soon lost its purchasing power. The Japs realised the danger ahead and took to printing notes on plain papers without water-marks and serial numbers. The race in bringing about the unworthy currency into circulation went high on all sides. The Jap soon depleted the resources of Malaya. A paper factory was started by the Japs in Kuala Lumpur, and it is said that most of the output of this factory went into the currency manufacture for Malaya. The value of the dollar soon fell so low that a cycle was costing about 40,000 dollars and a cow 60,000 dollars. Merchants were not counting notes. They were only weighing and receiving them in bundles. The rich were cautious and exchanged their currency into articles of value. The poor were selling their all to make their livelihood. It was a strange experience that the inhabitants of Malaya had never seen before. The debtors paid off their debts with ease and the creditors made good what little they got, by investing in houses and other immovable properties. Some have suffered heavily while some others have become multi-millionaires during these unsettled

times. Blackmarketeers flourished well. The commercialists and the moneylenders who could divine the changes to come exchanged their doubtful currency into solid investments. As a class they gained much more than what they seem to have lost.

### Starvation and Famine During the Jap Days

In those troublesome days people ran short of food crops. The British administration that was more interested in rubber, copra and tin, neglected the self-sufficiency principle on the food front. Before war Malaya was dependant on Australia and Siam for its food, though every possible food requirement could be had in Malaya itself with a little care for agricultural planning. Malaya is a fertile land with an even climate and requisite rains. The soil yields bumper crops. Even to-day unfortunately, Malaya is dependant for its milk supply on Australian tins though there is plenty of land and grass for the cows to graze upon. When the Jap came, severance and dislocation of the sea routes and supply lines threatened Malaya with acute famine. The Jap forced every man of Malaya, under threat of punishment, to grow food-crops or atleast vegetable gardens. From this duty even a governor was not exempted. Every courtyard became a petty garden of vegetables. But the problem of rice was still there. Rice crop could not be had within a short time. Waste land was no doubt cultivated but jungle clearing was a hard task. Active labour was mostly recruited for war purposes. Hence the

public of Malaya had to look to a short term substitute crop. Tapioca was freely growing everywhere. It is a long plant with multiple roots. Each plant can give about four to five seers of roots. These roots resemble our sweet potatoes. They are not tasty. Necessity is the mother of invention. Soon the people of Malaya began to prepare various dishes with the tapioca. At some places it was mashed and mixed up with rice. Bread was prepared with it at other places. 'When nothing else is offered, even hay will be tasty to the horse', says an old adage in Telugu. It has come true in Malaya. Tapioca saved innumerable lives in Malaya during those hard days. The people of Malaya could pull through the period of crisis with this God-sent gift of tapioca.

But all the strange and unusual diets led to deficiency conditions in the case of many Malaysians. Disease was everywhere and drugs nowhere. Many lives were lost for want of timely medical aid. Those that were having a few drugs with them made unscrupulous riches. At Teluk Anson I heard of a dresser, who had donated all his stock of medicines to the I. N. A. red-cross and refused to have any from them even when he was himself on the deathbed. During the days of starvation, disease and distress the Indians of Malaya had sacrificed their all for the cause they believed in.

### **The First and the Second I. N. A.s**

The Japs began to goad the Indian prisoners of war to form a National Army. Capt. Mohan Singh



Jap behaviour in the East was scandalous and their wartime civilisation barbarous. Mohan Singh chalked out his own programme which placed the Jap sincerity to acid test. Every Indian should forthwith be declared an independant citizen and the I. N. A. should be given the status and the privilege of the army of an independant ally. Indian affairs are primarily the concern of the I. N. A. and the Indian Independance League, and as such, must be entirely be left in the hands of those two representative bodies. Jap intervention in Indian matters must cease. The Jap help must come in only where it is sought for. The I. N. A. must be manned and trained by Indian officers only. Such was the contention put forth by the Indian leaders.

The Jap was still hopeful of his victory. He could not forego his would-be imperial interests in India. Hence he was not prepared to concede the demands of Capt. Mohan Singh. Indians were not trusted and equipped with proper armaments. The I. N. A. had to be satisfied with simple guns and goose-marching.

Mr. Rash Behari Bose, the old revolutionary, is already half Nipponised. It seems his wife too is a Jap. Many Indians in the East considered this man as a mere Jap sponsored figurehead. He issued an arrest warrant against Mohan Sing. He did not have the authority to issue any such warrant according to the first I. N. A. constitution, nor had he any backing of the Indian public for such a move, as is evident by his failure to get the co-operation of any Indian for his further steps. Two Jap M. P.s

(Military Police) presented to Mohan Singh this unauthorised arrest warrant, and took him into custody. But even before his arrest, Mohan Singh dissolved the first I. N. A. and this was perhaps the crucial sensitive point in the Indo-Nippon relations of 'co-prosperity'.

With the arrest of Mohan Singh, the Indian enthusiasm in the East came to its lowest ebb. The Jap professions of aiming of at 'Greater Asia'—'Asia for Asiatics'—'Liberated Asia'—and 'Co-prosperity between the Asiatic Nations'—were thoroughly exposed. Jap intentions of founding an Asiatic Empire were crystal clear.

\* Mr. Rashid, who used to say aloud that he had only two interests in life—God above and Mohan Singh below, happened to be the first Indian to contact the Japs after Mohan Singh's arrest; he approached the Jap, not to get Mr. Singh released, but to get the I. N. A. reorganised and get himself to succeed Mr. Singh.

The relations between the Japs and the Indians were becoming more and more strained every day. Wherever the Japs tried to misbehave or dominate, the Indians gave the rebuff. Pitched battles and street-fighting became a common occurrence everywhere. The Jap diplomats had already foreseen the inevitable doom of their nation and the failure of their designs on other nations. They failed even in their policy of winning the goodwill of Asiatics temporarily. Neighbouring Asiatic countries were not prepared

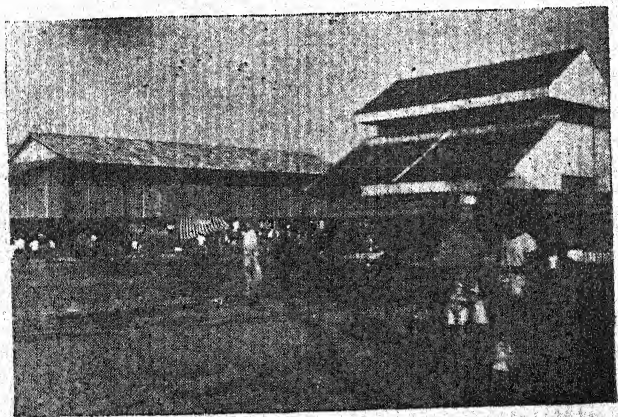
to co-operate with the Japs wholeheartedly, atleast for the duration of the war. Total Jap armaments could not equal hitherto even one year's production of America. All those Asiatics that received the Nippon with open arms have now come to organise underground anti-fascist and anti-Jap guerilla bands. This tragedy was going on in Burma, Malaya, Siam and Indonesia. Of course, the Chinese were still openly carrying on their fight, spurning the latest Jap offers of withdrawal from and non-intervention in China and the like. The dying man was catching hold of every straw that could beam forth a ray of hope, though forlorn it might turn out to be.

At this critical period Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose arrived in Malaya after four months of under-sea travel in a submarine from Berlin. With him came the instructions from the Germans that he should not speak of his differences with the Congress and Mahatmaji, and that whatever he says or does, he must do it in the name of the Congress and the Country.

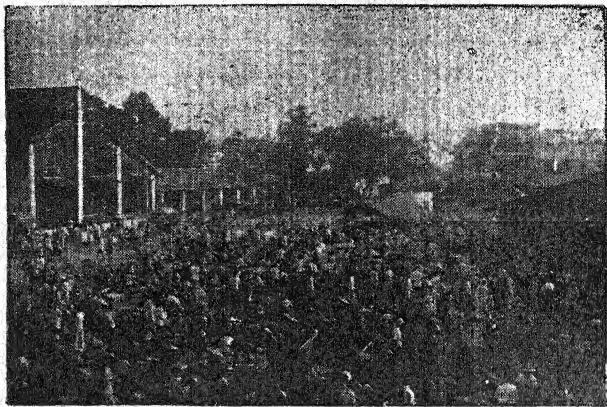
Mr. Bose, a former president of the Congress, is a born genius in the art of organisation and consolidation of the scattered but surging forces. He is a fiery nationalist. His was a deeply philosophical life with a burning zeal to serve God and the country in one. His faith in the inevitable victory of the Axis powers was firm as a rock. This was his first miscalculation. 'The enemy's danger is our best opportunity' was his second thesis. This was so in feudal and isolated warfares but not in



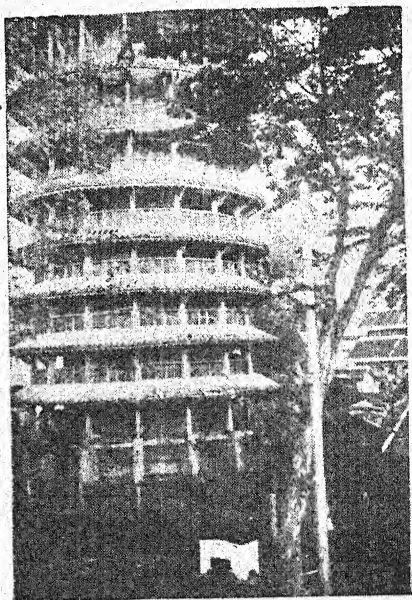
*Lower Perak Indian Association Teluk Anson*



*MARKET TELUK ANSON*



*MARKET PLACE TELUK ANSON*



*Clock Tower Teluk Anson*

global wars. Dr. Hatta of Indonesia who also first cooperated with the Japs in the early days, soon realised the faulty nature of his step. He declared with bitter practical experience, that Indonesia should not follow in the footsteps of Mr. Bose but that it should prefer the path of Nehruji. Nehruji said, "In order to achieve independence don't depend on the help of the Axis or Allied Powers but stand on your own legs." The third miscalculation of Bose was that if a small army of 50000 strong marches into India, the whole of India would revolt against the British. But already a million Negro, Canadian and other troops were posted in the Eastern theatre of India, to attack this baby force. The Japs were not in a position even to equip this small army in a proper manner.

General Tojo, the Jap premier, in his days of decline accepted Bose as his sole adviser in all diplomatic matters. He honoured him as no premier of a gigantic empire ever before honoured a common man of another country. At a public meeting addressed by Tojo, Bose arrived in the middle of the speech. Tojo got down from his seat, bowed down to Bose and offered him his own seat, himself occupying the second seat. All the Nazi, Bolshevik, and the Fascist pomp and grandiosity of public receptions to their leaders, was arranged by the Japs for Bose. Instructions were given to all Jap soldiers that they must salute every photo of Gandhiji and Bose. Bose's personality and presence again stimulated the Indians in the East to action. Japs began to be more and

more lenient to the Indians. There was a reversal of Jap policy and attitude towards Indians. The international situation was not favourable to the Japs and the Japs promised every concession to all the Asiatic countries under their command.

Indian labourers joined the I. N. A. in thousands and the Indian business-men contributed to the Indian Independence League in millions of dollars. Sjt. Bose paid hard cash for every article bought from the Japs. Azad Hind Bank was started to look after the finances of the Provisional Government of India. The formation of Azad Hind Fouz saved the honour and lives of the one million Indians in the East from the clutches of Jap tyranny.

Japs constructed a trans-continental-railway from Rangoon to Bangkok. There was already a railway line connecting Bangkok with Singapore. This new railway link can transfer men and material from Malaya to the Burma front. The Siam Railway that the Japs constructed took away a lakh of Indian lives. The jungle climate and life were hard to endure. There was an acute shortage of medicines. People over-worked themselves in the construction of this railway and death took away a lakh of noble Indian souls. To have lost a lakh of lives meant to have lost one in every seven Indians in Malaya. These sufferings of Indians were not over with the fall of Japan. Shortage of medicines and clothes continued and the Indian National Congress sent a Medical Mission and also a considerable number of bales of clothes.



Whatever the differences might be between the principles and the policies of the Congress and Bose's Azad Hind Movement, one thing is indisputable. The motives of the Indian National Army were all pure and noble. The organisation was superb. The soldiers were of the highest integrity, discipline and valour; and any nation should be proud of them. Their fighting capacity was of the highest order. Patriotism was the guiding force behind every one of them. Their constant thought was to die in order to make our future progeny live in eternal independence and glory. None of the present day victors or victims have ever endured such sufferings as the Indians in East Asia have endured, nor could they ever make such sacrifices in men, money and material, for the cause of their mother-land as these brave Indians have done.

### Communists in Malaya

Almost all the communists of Malaya are Chinese. They are to-day controlling indirectly most of the labour organisations. They are a band of sincere and selfless workers. Among them can be seen a large number of women too. The spirit of youth is there in every communist. Their actions are all first reactions. They lack in wisdom and balance of views and actions which come with age and experience.

Before the British made their withdrawals according to plans in Malaya, they handed over guns, rifles and ammunition to the communists.

The communists' fight against the Japs was a life and death struggle. But the Japs were a hundred-fold stronger than the communists. Hence organised warfare was out of question. The Japs captured all communist strongholds of clubs and associations. The policy of repression followed and the comrades were chased from place to place till they took refuge in the jungles. The communists did not surrender themselves. They chose the path of guerilla warfare.

Having retreated into the deep jungles, they used to run into the towns now and then, and kidnap and kill a jap here and a Jap there. For every Jap head lost, atleast five or six Chinese were to lose their heads in the Jap hands. There was no discrimination, no law and no justice. Whoever lives in the neighbourhood of the scene of offence, is to run the risk of getting the capital punishment.

Living in the jungles, the comrades wanted finances. Unsigned letters were despatched demanding thousands of dollars from the innocent public to be kept in specified spots. These areas are either under the stone near a bridge or some such out-of-the-way place. If a report is to be made to the Jap Military Police, the whole family will be wiped out of existence. If the demand is not complied with, the man may be kidnapped any moment. God only knows as to what would happen to the victim the next moment. If the dacoit is appeased with meeting his demand, no further proof is required to state that that man is a bourgeoisie. He

can afford to pay a second time positively.

Between the devil and the deep sea, innocent people had to live for full four years with heavy hearts and uncertain lives. Indians were not an exception to these gangsters and public plunderers that used to kill and rob at the point of the pistol. The communists' grudge seemed to be more against the so-called capitalist than any system of capitalism. To have a thousand dollars and live in a village was to be a capitalist. To have the same and live in a town was to be a proletarian. Looting and living seemed to be the way of evolving the socialist state. Perverted notions and imported theories have reduced the cream of the youth into social criminals. The so-called jungle war of resistance could not do much harm to the Japs. On the contrary the communist and the Jap tyrannies made life unbearable to the innocent public.

Whatever one may think of the communists' way of doing things, one cannot but have high regard for certain of their outstanding qualities. They are idealists and no sacrifice is too great for them to make, for the sake of their principles. They have contributed a lot to the cause of labour and have organised them in a splendid way. They are all simple and selfless individually and personally. During the last four years of jungle life they have suffered heavily. I have seen many boys with bayonet marks on their bodies. Many have tropical ulcers. Their life all these years was one of the hardest. They developed super-human endurance.

But analysing the actions of the comrades objectively we find that their actions were brutal and unpardonable.

## The Congress Medical Mission

The Indian National Congress is the premier political organisation of India that has been fighting for India's liberty during the last half a century. Every Indian is eligible to be a member of that august body irrespective of his religion, caste or creed. The Congress stands for undiluted democracy based on adult suffrage. In India where the innumerable poor and the starving form the absolute majority, a socialist state is a necessary corollary to a real democracy. By virtue of its fundamental principles, the Congress happens to be the only premier political body of India that guarantees a bright future for the proletariat of India.

Indians in Malaya carried on their fight against British Imperialism with the same ideals before them, as the Indian National Congress has been cherishing all these long years. Actually they fought in the name of the Congress and democracy. When it was remarked once that Bose was the uncrowned king of India, Bose resented that title. He said that the Congress was the only representative organisation of India. What all the I. N. A. would achieve should automatically go to the Congress, the moment India is free.

An appeal having come from the Malayan Indians for medical relief, Indians in India conside-

red it a justifiable demand. Malayan Indians have got a right to make the demand because of their prodigious sacrifices for their motherland.

What could the eleven doctors do for the five millions of Malaysians? After all, disease is a continuous chain and a temporary mission cannot achieve much. But the mission could meet a crisis in the Malayan history of public health, caused by acute shortage of drugs. When a sick man comes, sickness and the remedies only should come to the mind of the physician. The thought never should arise as to who he is and what he is. Friend or foe, Malay, Muslim, Chinese, Buddhist or Hindu, all are one and should be treated as such. Such were the instructions given to every one of the medical officers by Maulana Azad, the then president of the Congress.

"What we are doing here is neither charity nor gift, since both mean the pittance thrown at the poor man's face by the rich. This is a drop of blood from one bleeding heart to another bleeding heart. India herself has just recovered from a terrible famine. If you accept it for what it is worth India will be happy and eternally happy." This is what one of our medical officers declared to a Chinese gathering representing thirty eight various associations, in one of the premier towns of Malaya.

It was the last working day of the mission in one of its centres. The news spread like wild fire that the mission centre was being closed. It was July 26, 1946 and a Malayan mother came to one of our

centres with a baby in her arms. She knew fully well that that last one day's medicine was not going to heal her baby. She picked up her prescription slip, looked into the doctor's face, stood still and dropped a tear. In the glittering tears was reflecting the true and ideal mother that is 'all love'. Her's was a language that had no words to speak, no letters to write; it was a divine language expressing her innermost feelings. The feelings of India have been reflected in Malaya. India and Malaya are one. *Long live Malaya!*

At a public meeting held in the Dew Recreation Club, Teluk Anson, Director Cholkar gave a spirited speech. Cholkar was formerly the Deputy Director of the Congress Medical Mission to China. Dr. Kotnis of that Mission died in China. By shedding his life for the cause of China, Kotnis has cemented the kinship of China and India permanently. His was a supreme national service. Cholkar said that he had given his instructions to every one of the members of the present mission too, that they must go on treating the poor every minute of their stay in Malaya, day and night, even if they themselves fell sick.

The mission has on the total treated about one lakh and twelve thousand patients within their short period of stay. It has shown to Indians in Malaya that the heart of India is not dead and that India feels for her grateful sons abroad. To others it has proved, that to the Congress and India, service to humanity is the supreme ideal. Wherever there is human suffering it is felt by the Congress

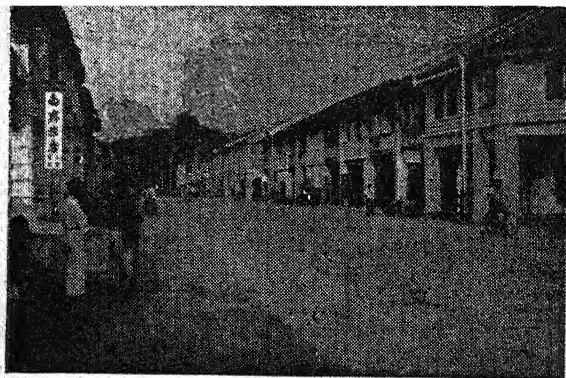


*Bagan Datoh Town*

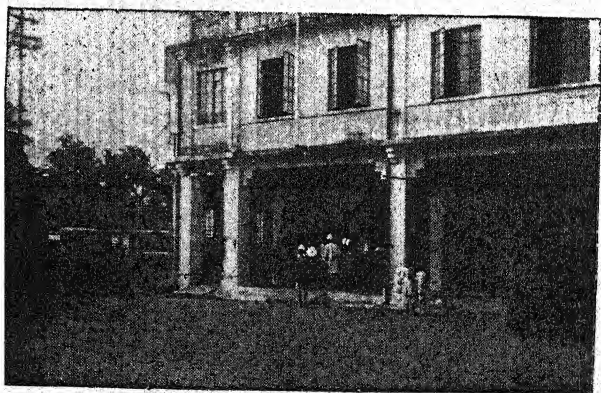


*Tapah Town*





*Tapah Town*



*Bidor Town*

and India. Asia must feel as one and show to its internal groups its sense of mutual aid and co-operation. India, Indonesia and China meet in Malaya and Malaya must be the fortress of good will, fair-play and union between the three nationalities. It is the real nucleus of the League of Asiatic Nations.

### The First Malayan Indian Conference

The inaugural session of the Malayan Indian Conference was held in the Chettiar Hall, Sentul, Kuala Lumpur, on the third, fourth and fifth of August, 1946. Mr. John Thivy and Sri Brahmachary Kailasam took an active part in making it a success. Mr. J. Bhattacharya of our mission was the chairman of the Conference. This conference is to be the pre-view of the proposed Malayan Indian Congress. This Malayan Indian Congress will give impetus to the far Eastern Indians to form their own congresses on the model of the Indian National Congress at home. It will also have the opportunity of acting as the external branch of the parent organisation. The August conference was attended by over five hundred delegates. The programme was a crowded one, dealing mostly with the constitution and procedure of the Congress.

There is the labour situation that is staring in the face of every Indian in Malaya. In Malaya the labourers form an overwhelming majority of the Indians. Ofcourse the business and banking interests of Indians too are equally important.

Indian labour is disorganised unlike the Chinese. An Indian labourer is paid a half to one third of what a Chinese labourer gets. With better organisation, the Chinese labourer avoids cutthroat competition, shows sincerity in work, and sticks to his contract sum. Many of the Indian labourers are illiterate, disorganised, and addicted to drink and similar vices. They forgot their immediate demands and adored the white planters till recently, as demi-gods. These unfortunate labourers are controlled and exploited in the most inhuman manner by the estate managers through the agency of unscrupulous middlemen who used to take overhead commissions both from the planters as well as from the labourers. The labourers were seduced into all sorts of unworthy avocations so much that they forgot what they were and began to lead life for bare animal existence. After the advent of the Jap regime the Indian labourers have opened their eyes.

The average income of an Indian labourer is hardly a dollar a day. The purchasing power of the dollar is very low, the cost of daily necessities being high. But days are rapidly changing and the price index of commodities is coming down. With better organisation, the wages will surely go high and change of times will bring down the cost of living.

While the Indian labourer, having lost one out of seven in the seven lakhs of their population in Malaya, is struggling hard for his livelihood, the benevolent Indian industrialists and a few pseudo-

nationalists have planned a dangerous game. They began to shout at the top of their voices, that the Indian labourers from Malaya must be forthwith repatriated and those Malayan Indians that have come to India should be prevented from going back to Malaya. Whatever the other conditions might be, a labourer in Malaya is having free quarters, free medical aid and free education for his children. Is there no moral responsibility on the Government and the Industry in India to guarantee the repatriated labourers equal opportunities and facilities, and security from unemployment as was obtaining in Malaya? Does the Indian Industry want us to believe that it is still in the same old infant stage as to live upon the half-starved labourer? Further the Malayan Union will one day be a reality. The British plan of nationalisation of industry and agriculture in Malaya is very easy to fructify. The whole cultivable land is in the hands of a few and that too in the shape of huge estates. If the administration chooses to pay off the investors at a 3 or 4 % basis annually, it can immediately take over all the land and industry into its hands without having the necessity of paying further compensation. By this step the state can make a sure profit. If we look ahead into the future, we will realise it to be a great necessity to retain and strengthen the Indian position in Malaya. Almost all the labour in the plantations is Indian, and Indians will be the first to benefit by any process of socialism.

In Malaya, the Chinese are 23 lakhs, Malays

21 lakhs and the Indians 7 lakhs. Malaya is the eastern outpost of India just as Ceylon is the southern one. Is the Indian to play any great part in the East or should he voluntarily wipe himself out of the Malayan map ? This is a vital matter for all Indians to think about from the broad National point of view.

The Indian private banker is living upon exorbitant and greedy interest on his idle capital. It is better not to speak of his rates and methods. Instead of promoting any industrial growth in Malaya the banker has only acted as a leech not only towards the needy Indians but to all. The perfect harmony that the average Indian in Malaya has maintained with other communities all these years is being every minute threatened by the private money lenders. The Malayan Nation is sure to come into being. In their own interests it is better for the Indian money lenders to withdraw their business from Malaya as early as possible.

For the Indian there is good field in Malaya if he gives up his trade tricks and adapts himself to peace-time methods of fair business. These and several other things are to be tackled by the Indians of Malaya. I hope and believe that the Malayan Indian Congress will take up all these problems into consideration.

The Congress Medical Mission strictly kept itself aloof from the internal politics of the Malaysians—particularly the Indians. But its very presence gave a psychological stimulus to the leaders of the

Indian community to act. Observation, non-intervention and advice where sought, was the policy of the Congress Medical Mission staff.

## ASIA IS ONE

### Malays and the Indians

Thousands of years ago when the Malay was still in his ancient Indonesian home, the Indian way of life and culture had influenced him to a great extent. Those were the days when the political rule did not mean economic domination. The powerful rulers of South India established with Malays a sort of mutual safeguards and protection against foreign domination. The Malays also embraced Hinduism and retained it till in the middle ages the Arab traders who went there gradually converted them to Islam. Though the Malay has thus embraced Islam as his faith, in so far as his culture and customs are concerned, he only formed a synthesis of both Hinduism and Islam. This is a special feature of the Malay civilisation. The Malay has discarded idol worship but he has still retained many of his ancient Hindu marriage customs. He has adopted the lungie, but only on the ancient Hindu Pyzama. The present Arabic script only gave a new colouring to the beautiful and the simple Malay language that is rich in its Sanskrit vocabulary. The Malayan lady is as faithful to her mate as the Indian lady in India is. Modesty is the special virtue of both. Even while she has absorbed the Arabic veil as part of her dress, that

veil does not conceal her modest face and noble features, but is used only as a fancy upper cloth over the shoulders. Ghosha is non-existent. But her free and equal social life with man has not made her deviate from her path of virtue. The national pride and dignity of every Malay prevents him from stooping to things that are low and unworthy. He wants an honest life. There is identity of thought and identity of national traits between Indians and Malays. There is even some historical record to show that the present Malay might be of the same stock as the Malwas of Central India.

To-day unfortunately the Malays are as backward politically, economically, commercially and industrially as Indians themselves were half a century ago. What progress India has made during this period our Malay brethren must study and make. Towards that end the Malay will have to undergo several hardships and make innumerable sacrifices. India must guide the neighbouring Malaya in the path of progress and help her in her onward march. A study of the Indian political and economic history is of great interest to the Malaysans. Malays must also study between lines the British diplomatic traditions and designs.

### Indians and the Chinese

These two great nations had their cultural contacts since a few thousands of years. China sent its scholars to India to barter its philosophy of life with the Indian religion. The proverbial



Chinese spirit of hospitality had a deep and lasting impression on the minds of the Indian visitors to China. The age old logic and the mental gymnastics of the Indian Pundit were studied and adopted by China.

The Indian conception of life after death had a deep appeal to the reasoning mind of the Chinese. China embraced Buddhism with the deepest fervour and faith. Buddhism happened to be the one great faith and philosophy that suited the genius of Chinese national culture. To the Buddhist 'Nirvana' ie., freedom from re-birth, became the supreme end in life. The two steps to that goal enunciated by Lord Buddha stand even today as the two great racial traits of the Chinese. They are virtue and 'Ahimsa' ie., freedom from sin and freedom from aggression. China has remained till to-day a non-aggressive nation.

Indians and Chinese have a common trait. They personify virtues and worship them as gods and demigods. 'Satyanarayana' is the god of Truth to the Indians. The Chinese have a goddess of Mercy. In his depressed moods the Chinese devotee goes to her temple and kneels before her.

Along with the admiration of virtues the Chinese developed fear—fear of ghosts and devils. Every vicious man that is dead becomes a ghost that haunts. He haunts not only the living but also the inanimate buildings. It is said that in ancient days a few superstitious Chinese even used to erect huge walls before their

palatial buildings lest the looks and the shadows of the ghosts might fall on their dwellings. In his fear of ghosts the Chinese resorted to the ancient Indian study of 'tantra' and 'mantra'. Five-metal alloyed discs with magic syllables included in triangles and quadrangles are still believed by many to ward off evil. In adopting the Indian prejudices, fears and beliefs the Chinese have overstepped the Indian himself. An Indian prays to God to drive the devil out but the Chinese cousin bribes the devil with offerings and prayers to keep him away.

Though the Indian mother can never compete with the Chinese mother in the race for the multiplication of the human race, she is at least second to her in that aspect. Birth control is considered by both as the most heinous crime and ugly sin. They are all-love to their children. Many a mother of both the races adopts a few more orphans in addition to her own children.

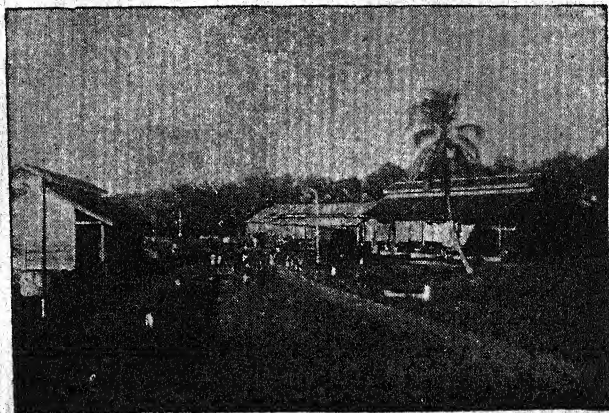
The Hindu has given up his one vice viz., polygamy. Though it is still existing in the Chinese thowkies, the younger generation of labourers is usually free from this vice. If a woman dies defending her modesty and chastity, the Indian admires her as a saint while the Chinese extol her as an angel. With all this identity of the psychological background the Indian and the Chinese live together under the same roof in Malaya. They adopt each other's children, share each other's grievances and develop a fine harmony which is a mutual fortress against any 'white' designs of 'divide and rule'.



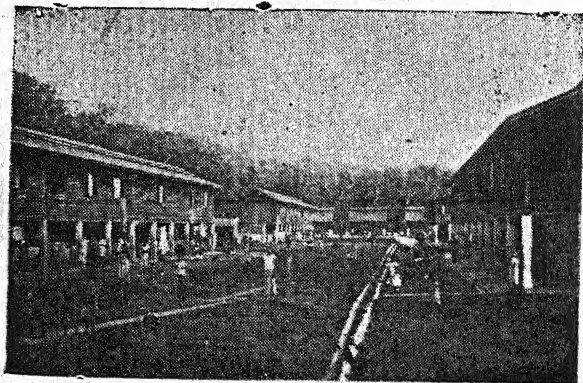
Congress Mission Outdoor Work Bidor Town



A: Wooden Cottage



*A Roadside Village*



*Novoscotia Estate (Workers Lines)*

## 'Divide and Rule Policy' in Malaya

Hitherto Malaya is being administered by district officers who are responsible to the Governors and Governor-General. The Governors are advised by their Councils which are dominated by officials. The Governor is not bound by the advice of these Councils even. With the advent of the Atlantic Charter and the rapid changes in the modern world, direct rule as a means of safeguarding economic privileges will have to go. Their continuation will only mean a chain of further wars. The British have their heavy investments in Malaya while their population is hardly 0.5%. How to protect them is the British problem today. Acre for acre Malaya is the richest imperial preserve of the British. Malaya produces 45% of world's total produce of rubber and 35% of tin.

The imperialists have designed a new trap. By their 'policy of divide and rule' the British want to rule and exploit Malaya as long as possible. Imperial designs have kept the three major communities of Malaya apart. Buying off individuals, groups and communities with petty concessions is an age-long imperial game. In their greed for self advantage got through minor concessions, the three communities of Malaya are falling into the British hands. A pie of self advantage got at the expense of another is the surest seed of poison in this world. This is so in personal relations, communal divisions and even in international adjustments. Conciliations and compromises can never destroy this venom. One must go to the root and root it out.

At first the British proclaimed to the world that they are going to create a self-governing Malayan Union that shall be democratic. In order to establish a Malayan Union a Malayan Nation is to be created with Chinese, Malays and Indians who form the bulk of the population. What is it that is to determine the nationhood? It is naturally the citizenship. The Britisher decided not to give up his way of economic exploitation. Now he is a victor and why should he do so? In order to carry out his plans of exploitation, he has necessarily to retain dual citizenship. Retaining the British he is acquiring the Malayan citizenship. With the formation of a genuine self-governing Malayan Nation foreign exploitation will certainly be curtailed and controlled. Hence the procedure. Having acquired two citizenship rights, the Britisher asked Chinese, Malays and the Indians to decide for themselves as to how many each wanted.

The Chinese demanded three citizenship rights the Malaya, Chinese and the British. He feels he has a dual home in China and China can prosper at the expense of Malaya. What is the percentage of Chinese that have a dual home? It is ridiculously low.

But still the Chinese makes his claims. Why? The backwardness of the masses some of whom have forgotten the Chinese language even, and speak only the Malay tongue is the causative factor. Taking advantage of their illiteracy and ignorance, the Chinese capitalist, with one leg in China and the other in Malaya, stages his devil dance of multiple citizenship. The Chinese

demand for a British citizenship has a special significance — perhaps he wants to hop into some other British possession. Even some of the Indian money lenders and black-marketeers play to a similar tune. This extra-territorial loyalty is the destructive force against nationalisam and democracy.

The Malay has no interest in any other country and hence is devoid of a dual home. The Chinese demand for multiple citizenship rights has flared up the Malay passion to its highest pitch. The Malay has come to feel that he is the only son of the soil and that every other man is a looter and an exploiter. The high tension now existent between the Chinese and the Malays may explode any moment like a volcano.

Which nation on earth can prosper with its people owing allegiance to some other distant nation? Multiple citizenships have only cut at the roots of the proposed Malayan Nation. Malayan Nation is a myth with the disruptive multiple citizenship proposals as the basis of it. It is only after putting an end to this dual loyalty that modern Europe began to develop her new civilization, Independence and free thought. The Malay has got his common economic, religious and cultural ties with the Indonesian. The affairs of Malaya are having their repurcussions on the minds of the Chinese, Indonesians and the Indians—the three great races of the East. Open clashes between the Chinese and the Malays were not an infrequent occurrence in Malaya before.



Before launching the scheme of the Malayan Union the British demanded the 'surrender by the Sultans of their nominal sovereignty rights. The Sultans did it willingly with full faith in the British professions. But when the Malays and their Sultans realised the hollowness of the Union proposals with multiple citizenship rights they rose to a man. They demanded the British to transfer power to the Sultans and quit Malaya.

The Malays are economically backward. They are merely tillers of the soil. They are neither in the trades, nor in the professions nor even in the wage earning labour. There is no likelihood of their competing with or ousting the British vested interests. To transfer political power to the now defunct Sultan regime in exchange for economic safeguards and guarantees for the vested interests, is the safest course for the British capital. The British brought forth their Federation proposals—ie., Federation of Sultans instead of a Union of the people.

But Malays form only 41% of the population. Revival of the Sultanism is anti-democratic and is against the fundamentals of the Atlantic Charter. In which way is the average Malay to improve his economic backwardness so long as his Sultans are going to mortgage the national wealth of Malaya to the foreign investors? How are the Sultans to live in peace having antagonised 59% of non-Malays in Malaya?

Malays are politically immature and are under the control of public servants and the Sultans who

take their pensions from the British. With the Chinese looking to China as their motherland, the Malay is feeling that his own position is not safe in a pure democracy. The Sultan is a mere religious head of the Malays today. To revive his political sovereignty is to infuse religious fanaticism into politics, and thus unite temporal and spiritual sovereignty in one as the medieval Europeans did.

In view of these facts the British design is clear and evident. They have cajoled the Chinese by conceding dual citizenship. They are making the Malays do policing duties to their estates and mines by offering them limited political power in return (Federation in the place of Union). Fearing that some day all their designs may fail, the British have decided to keep Singapore under their direct rule and strengthen it as a powerful naval, military, air and trade centre. A strong Singapore is a certain threat to every Asiatic State that may question the imperial vested interests.

Mr. Malcolm Macdonald has revealed his Federation plan as the best substitute for the Malayan Union plan. This in short means that the British are setting up a dummy minority autocracy with the Singapore bayonet at the back. The Sultans in future may have to rely on the British might in Singapore for their own existence.

The imperialists in Malaya do not usually speak of Malaya and the Malays but talk in terms of the Malays, Chinese and the Indians. On Monday they praise one, on Tuesday they appreciate the

second, on Wednesday they ignore the third, on Thursday they interview each individually and on Friday they cajole the one ignored before. Setting the three cocks one against the other on Saturday, the imperial boss takes a moral holiday on Sunday and goes to the Church to atone for his sins. This is the weekly routine of the British 'Chanakya' in the East. On the pretext of mediation, a benevolent imperialism surrenders Siamese interests to the French and the Indonesian interests to the Dutch imperialists. Malaya is the meeting point of the three great Asiatic nations and the destiny of Malaya will decide Asiatic peace. The three great Asiatic nations should never fall into any of the imperial traps and cut one another's throats. The three communities of Malaya should sacrifice extreme self-interest and narrow communal advantages in favour of forming a united Malayan Democratic Nation with the flesh and blood of Malays, Chinese and Indians based on single citizenship rights.

### A Word to the Chinese and the Indians

The Chinese and the Indians have their heavy investments and commercial interests in Malaya. If they forgo their dual citizenship while the British imperialists enjoy the same, it will not be the Malaysans that will be benefitting by their sacrifices but the British exploiters. This is because of the economic backwardness of the Malays. What shall be their position when that situation arises? If they are prepared to forego their

interim advantages such as dual citizenship rights and make common cause with the Malays as against the imperial gamblers, they will be doing a lasting service to the cause of justice and Asia's solidarity.

Even those who have their dual capital interests, one in Malaya and the other in their ancestors' land, need not lose anything. If they chose either of these two countries as their father-land, they can have mutual exchange of properties as it is likely that one half may decide in favour of Malaya and the other half in favour of their mother-land.

### A Word to the Malays

The Malaysans are commercially, agriculturally and industrially backward. Their conditions cannot improve without State backing and revolutionary socialism. This can not be achieved in any state other than a free sovereign Democratic Republic. Their reaction to the sinister move for multiple citizenship rights is leading them to demand the political power back to the Sultans.

Their demand will exclude and antagonise 59% of the non-Malaysans. Having done so how can the Sultans live in peace excepting with the Singapore bayonets? Their voices and actions can be controlled with ease as those of a People's Republic can never be controlled. What is the good of having such a pseudo-liberty?

The Sultans must cooperate with the other Malaysans and help to form a genuine Malayan Nation. They must demand from the British an

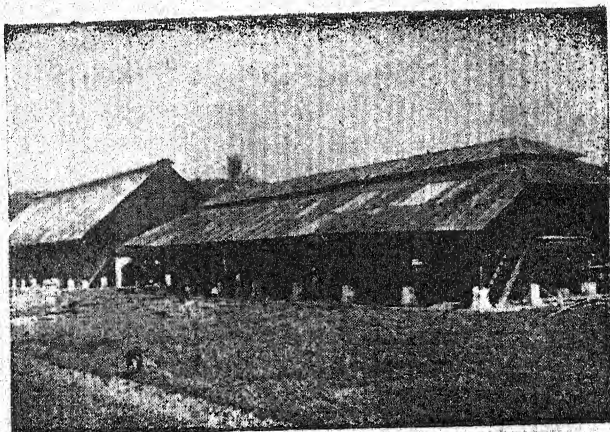
unfettered self-governing Democratic State for all Malaysians based upon single citizenship.

### Back Home

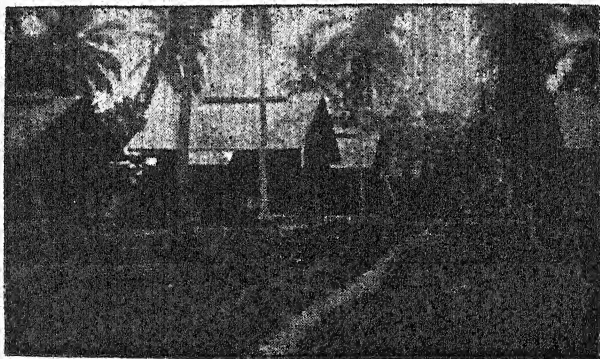
On August sixth we left port Swettenham by S. S. Talma. Hundreds of Indians and others came to the port to bid adieu to us. Behind the wavings of their kerchiefs could be seen the deep feelings of heavy hearts. Many of these were honorary workers in our Mission at its various centres. They were all sincere and disciplined workers. The people of Malaya have so deeply absorbed us into themselves that they made us forget our kith and kin temporarily these few months. We were not treated as strangers nor were we honoured as guests. Wherever we went we were treated as brethren and with the same affection.

We had to leave and we were leaving Malaya. The beautiful scenes of Malaya right up from Alor Star to Singapore in the south were flashing before our eyes. The fine roads with all their acute curves, steep heights and deep slopes were all there, with the dorianan and the mangoosterin fruits which are sweet and popular in Malaya. The latter, though not of good odour, are very sweet and tasty.

The Chinese that are so proverbially hospitable and cheerful are all there. It is not likely that we may see again in the near future the innocent and sturdy Malay faces. Those faces reflect the plain



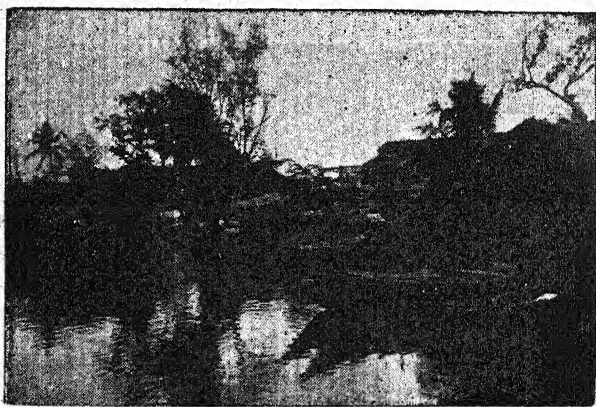
*Workers Quarters:-*



*Workers Quarters in a Coconut Estate.*



*Indian Workers in a Coconut Estate*



*A Riverside View*



hearts inside and the smiling lips convey the typical rural gay spirit, free from care.

'Whatever may happen, I must go and see my Congress doctor' was what a little girl of seven was bawling out while pushing ahead rushing through the crowd. She is from my parts and is all feeling. How can I forget this little determined face !

To a Chinese gathering at Bagandatoh, one of our doctors said that he was looking to the day when the Asiatics ceased to think in terms of Chinese, Malays and Indians. The whole world is one unit, one race, and one nationality ie. humanity. From that cosmopolitan little 'League of Nations' in Malaya, we were coming back to India. The feelings of buoyancy with which we had left India were no longer floating in our hearts. With heavy hearts we were all standing still on the deck of S. S. Talma. The splendid cooperation of the Malayans and their deep feelings of brotherhood are still fresh in our minds.

Gradually the shores of Malaya together with the boats, lights, and lighthouses all faded beyond the horizon. We were in our Talma with its courteous crew. Hours after hours passed and the Sun went down into the sea. The moon-lit waves of the calm sea were being split up by the solitary swimming Talma.

We retired into our rooms, to brood over the life that had just disappeared beyond the horizon.

## The Calcutta Riots

After six uneventful days of sealife, we sailed into the Howrah waters. On the evening of 12th August we landed in Calcutta. Heavy rains greeted us on our arrival and in those rains we all proceeded to our headquarters, Dr. B. C. Roy's house. We brought back with us about eighty boxes of medicines and two microscopes.

Dr. B. C. Roy was not in town. He was expected to return to Calcutta on the eighteenth of August. The Students' Section of the Andhra Association of Calcutta arranged for a talk by me on 'Indians in Malaya' on the seventeenth. Capt. S. Roy of the Congress Mission also wanted me to stay in Calcutta till the 18th for certain discussions about mission affairs with Dr. B. C. Roy.

The Indian press published that the sixteenth was a 'direct action' day for the Muslim League. I could not till then foresee against whom it was meant and how it was going to be celebrated.

On the sixteenth I was held up with a friend of mine in Zakarayya Street. Gangs of goondas were parading in the streets with lathis, knives and spears. Shops were looted and the looted property was being openly distributed in the streets. The police were making street parades in lorries but they did not take any action though goondas were passing before their very noses with arms and looted property. Law and order came to a stand still. Anarchy was the ruling law.

Apparently the city was left to the care of social criminals the goondas. Our house was attacked by mobs in their hundreds several times a day. Self-defence with guns could protect us for twenty four hours. On the seventeenth evening we were all evacuated to another so-called safety zone and that was in the Central Avenue. On the eighteenth morning I was asked to walk to another place, the 'Matri Mandali' since the other was over-crowded. I had to wade through the bodies of corpses with faces defaced, bullet-ridden hearts and limbs mutilated. On the 19th evening with starvation threatening every moment, I had to pass through the streets of 'hell' with a desperate 'freedom from fear' in order to reach the Howrah Station. Somehow I could get into the station and catch that day's train.

In our compartment there were four berths and two were reserved for Muslims and two for Hindus. Myself and another Hindu engineer friend of mine occupied the two seats. The two Muslims were from Hyderabad State and they were escorted to the station by the Hindus. They were good and cultured men and we enjoyed their company well.

I had no bath for four days. All my belongings had to be abandoned in Calcutta. 'Cats have nine lives and you are one among them. How could you escape from the Jaws of Death?' writes Captain Roy, later in a letter to me.

The Malayan Muslim that greeted us on the last day of our mission in Malaya came to my memory.

What a contrast! What a fine Islamic culture Malaya contributed to the world! The divine language of her heart is a superb embodiment of real culture. I bow down to her in all reverence.

‘ Long live Malaya ! ’ ‘ Jai Hind ! ’

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